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THE ALABAMA CLAIMS.

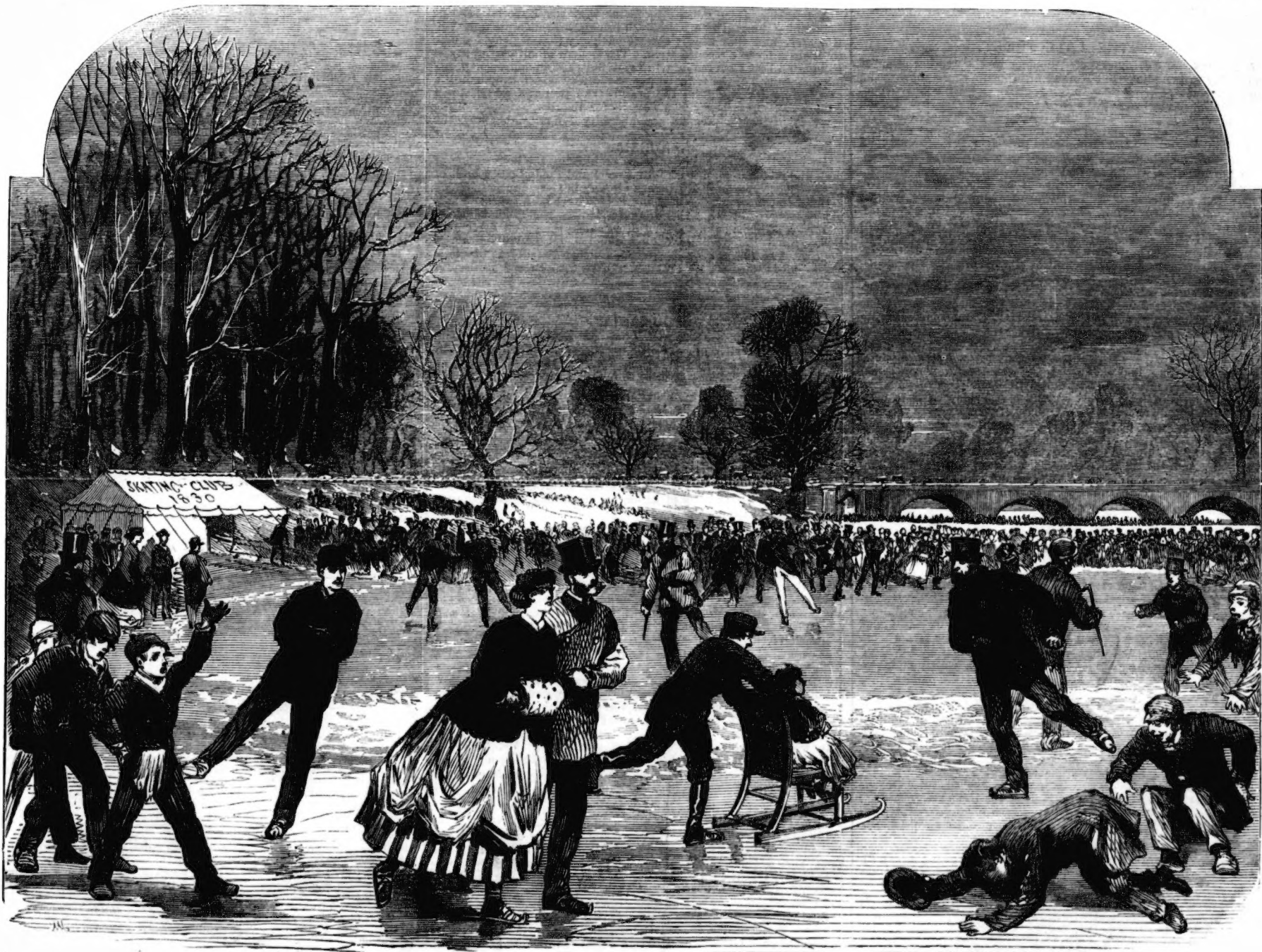
THE French, Belgian, and German newspapers are all under the impression that they know much more of English affairs than the English know themselves. The conversion of her late Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent to the Roman Catholic religion (on her death bed) and the adoption by her Majesty the Queen (in obedience to her mother's last injunctions) of the same faith, have been made as notorious by the gossiping correspondents of the foreign journals as the more recent change in the religious opinions of the Prince of Wales, who is understood to be already on the high road which leads to Rome. Our newspapers, while publishing rumours from all foreign countries, confine themselves, as regard home affairs, to records of actual facts; and thus it happens that the foreign journals have a monopoly of that sort of intelligence concerning England which consists of reports and *on dits*. Left to themselves in this wide field, they certainly make the most of it; and *L'Europe* of Frankfort—which has gained a special and enviable reputation by the brilliancy and high-flying power of its canards—has recently picked up news of the most important character with respect to England's intentions in the East. There is, it appears, to be a general "scrimmage" (in undiplomatic language) for the territory now possessed by Turkey, which the Frankfort journal believes will commence in the spring. England

intends to be in the thick of the fight, and for that reason wishes to clear her hands of all other difficulties as soon as possible. This—always according to *L'Europe*—is the true explanation of the anxiety shown by the present Government to settle the Alabama claims, which are now—as is known even in England—to be referred to arbitration.

In the meanwhile, leaving *L'Europe* to settle the Eastern question in accordance with its own devices, we may fairly congratulate ourselves on the fact that a serious attempt is at last being made to terminate a dispute which has remained far too long undecided. Perhaps, however, it would have been impossible at an earlier period to make those concessions to the American demands which are, it appears, to be agreed to now. The English Government, being, according to its own belief, legally in the right, could not yield to the representations and covert menaces of the United States at the very moment when we had so much to fear from their hostility. That moment has now passed, though there is no saying when it may return. Nevertheless, while the Fenians were flattering themselves and threatening us with the prospect of American assistance in connection with their raid upon Canada—to say nothing about the impracticable rising in Ireland—the English Government could not, without risk of its motives being misinterpreted, have quietly yielded all that the Government of the United States required in the affair of

the Alabama. It cannot go so far as that even now; but it has already proposed to refer the matter to arbitration.

This is neither the time nor the place for entering anew upon the consideration of a question which has already been discussed in every journal in the United Kingdom. The general verdict of England has been that we were in the right, and that we did all we could and all we ought to have done to prevent the departure of the Alabama from our shores. On the other hand, the general verdict of America has been that we did not make all necessary and lawful exertions to that end; but that, while sending orders publicly to Liverpool to detain the Alabama, our Government transmitted secret instructions to let her go. The American charge against England can be narrowed to this; for it is perfectly certain that the authorities at Liverpool were directed not to allow the vessel to go out of port. It may be said that the English Government were slow in arriving at a decision on the question whether or not the Alabama should be seized; but the decision *was* come to at last, and the fault of allowing her to leave port, if fault there was, lay with the officials at Liverpool. One would think that an inquiry into the conduct of the Liverpool officials might have been instituted without reference to the main question pending between England and America; for no one in this country is likely to believe that the Government sent down two sets of instructions, one for



SKATING ON THE SERPENTINE, HYDE PARK, DURING THE LATE FROST.

Nothing could have induced me to expose these hideous details of social corruption had I not seen with open eyes that not a few of my countrymen are on the point of rushing into a course which, unless wisely checked, must infallibly end in a similar ruin. I do not say that the majority of the working classes, any more than the learned and eloquent gentlemen the late Lord Advocate of the Whig Government, are Democrats in principle, and mean seriously to do anything that will seriously disturb the fine social balance of our mixed Constitution; but from my position as a thinking man, uninfluenced by the movements of parties, I can distinctly discern that they are being borne along by the current which they will not long be able to control; that they are being submitting to a dictation which they ought to have scorned, and that they are using levers with which they will shake the foundations of the house in which they dwell. It is because the proposed Reform Bills of the most recent epoch of our Legislation are democratic, and purely democratic, in their tendency, that, as a student of history and a friend to reason, I have from the beginning decidedly opposed them. Let no man imagine, however, that I am opposed to the recent Reform Bills because they propose to give a large increase of electoral power to the working classes. I have not the slightest objection to the working classes. Many of them are double-breasted and intelligent and more trustworthy in a political capacity than some classes of those immediately above them in the social scale. But what object is the principle on which it is proposed to give these classes additional votes? Is it the principle of representing numbers alone and determining all public questions in the last resort by the votes of the majority. This is the soul of the democratic despotism, and the rule of unreason, the iniquity of which it has been the object of the present lecture to establish. Rather than make a single movement towards disturbing the balance of our mixed Constitution, proceeding on a principle so utterly false, and of which it is impossible to limit the operation within any bounds short of universal suffrage, I am content that we should have no Reform Bill at all. To a person, indeed, like myself, looking on the whole matter merely as a man and a citizen, it showed like a madness from the beginning to talk of another Reform Bill at all so closely on the back of the sweeping measure of 1832. To some people, indeed, that Reform Bill, of which the consequences have in the main been salutary, forms the principal argument in favour of another dose of the same Whig medicine. Never was popular logic more at fault. I have heard of a patient who, having benefited by a prescription to take six drops of a strong medicine per day, took a bottle and killed himself. We constantly see people in Scotland who, having made themselves comfortable by taking a tumbler of toddy, make fools of themselves by taking three, and benests of themselves by taking six. The men who brought in the great Reform Bill of 1832 declared that it was to be a final measure; and they were wise. A final measure it certainly ought to have been in that direction. Any other Reform for the same purpose as that—viz., for the curtailment of aristocratic influence—would certainly not be wanted; and, in point of fact, is not wanted. The whole history of this country shows that the power of the monarchic and aristocratic elements in our Constitution has been, step by step, diminishing. According to all rational calculation, what we require now is not an increase of democratic force, but rather some regulative and counteracting influence to prevent its abuse. The whole course of our legislation since the Reform Bill, whether in the hands of Whigs or Tories, has been by the people and for the people; and among the people no class at the present moment receives a larger amount of Parliamentary and public consideration than the working classes. No class, by the change in the value of money and other causes, has been rising more rapidly into social weight and significance. If I were to judge by what I see and read, they are in much greater danger of being split by those who flatter them than of being oppressed by those who do not represent them. In point of number and talent they have as many representatives in the House of Commons as any other class. Our House of Commons is already as democratic as it can be made without destroying the just influence of the middle and upper classes. Our system of election is already too democratic in many respects to afford any rational guarantee for the return of members to the great national council who possess the essential requisites of large views and independent character. I see manifest signs in various places of the democratic habit of degrading a national councillor into a local deputy, of sending up a partisan instead of a thinker, of preferring the spokesman of a faction to the advocate of a people. I see men of high character and intelligence rudely called to account, reproached, slandered, and dismissed, merely because they did their duty in the House of Parliamentary deliberation with more than common intelligence, independence, and courage; and, what is worse, I see men afraid to speak the truth and willing to set their names to measures of which they do not approve, merely to tide over the moment, to settle the question, and stop the mouth of dangerous declaimers. Is this not democracy? And we are to have more of it forthwith! If a Reform Bill on American principles be carried in this country, one result of it I can predict with perfect certainty—that it will not improve the character of our national councillors. We shall have fewer of the rare and useful class of cool thinkers, more of the sparkling trumpets of local faction, the standard-bearers of popular passion, and the vendors of speculative crotchets. I say, therefore, again, much rather no Reform Bill at all than one that shall acknowledge no principle other than that which has produced the greatest of all social tyrannies in America. But was not the Reform Bill of 1832 founded on that very principle of government by a majority which is now denounced as democratic? Unquestionably it was, to a certain extent; but it was not therefore a good principle for all bills, because it did no harm—if, indeed, it did no harm—in that bill. That bill placed power in the hands of the middle classes—the body which, as the medium between the upper and lower social extremes, Aristotle declared to be the safest. The majority constituted by it was a majority of the select, if not of the best, at least of those who, as large experience has proved, can be most safely intrusted with political power. The majority now proposed to be established may form a majority of the lower and sub-middle classes against the middle and upper classes; and there lies the fault. The first care of a wise Reform Bill at the present crisis should be not to disfranchise the natural civic aristocracy of the country in favour of the democracy. It is a law of God which cannot be contravened, that the high should rule the low, and that civil government should not be thrown into the hands of those who, by nature and the unchangeable constitution of things, are least capable of governing. Do I then mean to treat the working classes as *infants*—to give them no voice in what concerns their own life and liberty, to declare them forever incapable of social manhood? Not at all. I do not degrade them; representation; I only refuse them domination. If a Reform Bill must be brought in to “settle the question,” to allay some real and much ingenuously discontent, and to stifle the demagogues (though this never will be possible), let us have a Reform Bill which, instead of cringing to John Bright, and borrowing stale formulas of French liberty-mongers, shall distinctly and decidedly denounce the insufficiency of the democratic principle, and give

us some reasonable guarantee for the preservation both of our civic and of our family aristocracy. Let us show the world that our British brain is capable of containing more than one idea at a time, and that we are not to be clamoured out of our common-sense, or cheated of our historic memories by the silly admiration of an ambitious theory. Let us give the working classes a vote—this is to say, more votes than they have now, for their actual influence is already considerable; but let us represent other things besides hands and labour. Every wise politician will agree with Aristotle's doctrine, that it is politic to give as many persons as possible some share in the government of the country, because there are always some persons who will imagine that, being excluded from political influence, they are oppressed, and there will always be another class of persons eager to rise into importance by fanning this feeling into a flame. It may be true, moreover, that there is a certain virtue of moral and intellectual training in the exercise of the franchise that ought not to be overlooked. Perhaps also, as Dr. Faley said, the discussion of political questions over a mug of beer in a village pothouse may save from worse recreations. This is a view of the matter, indeed, to which individually I attach little or no weight, because my observation seems to teach me that politics is a trade which, generally speaking, does more to debase than elevate those who have much to do with it; and I cannot see how entering with keen interest into all the selfish details of political partisanship should contribute anything towards making a man more intelligent, more virtuous, or more happy. I could point out to the working classes many more rational ways of spending their idle hours than in blowing storms in some civic or ecclesiastical tea-kettle. But if they will have it otherwise, let it be; only let me have a vote as well as you; let learning be represented as well as labour. Do not, while you claim political influence for yourselves, insist on having it in such a way as will virtually disfranchise all other classes of the community, and give us a House of Commons dictated by mere numbers. In one word, save us from America!

Under the head of "Schemes of Parliamentary Reform" the Professor said:—

The three points to be kept before the eye of the statesman in the preparation of a British Reform Bill for the year 1867 should be—(1). The securing of an adequate representation to the working classes; (2). A special representation for the civic, moral, and intellectual aristocracy of the people; (3). The provision of such a variety of entrances to the House of Commons as shall rescue the country from the danger of a one-sided and one-idea'd assembly of councillors elected under the swamping influence of an impassioned majority. Let us see how the conditions of the problem might be dealt with, having a due regard to the present political condition of this country. In the first place, I would start from the last great Reform Bill as an accomplished fact. It is; therefore let it be. In the second place, I would provide for the more extended representation of the working classes either by lowering the present general franchise, as was proposed by the late Whig Government, to £7, or by creating for them a special franchise analogous to that possessed by the English and Irish Universities. This might be done by dividing the country into districts, and enacting that all the working classes within each district who paid certain taxes and a certain low house rent should elect their own member, over and above the present representation of counties and boroughs. In the third place, I would balance this democratic force by the creation of a special representation for what I have called the natural, moral, and intellectual aristocracy of the community; and I would take those just as I find them in publicly recognised corporations, such as the Universities, the Faculty of Advocates and Writers to the Signet, the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons; the Royal Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, the Royal Society, and such like. The giving of a special suffrage to these bodies would secure the triple advantage of directly representing intelligent minorities, of favouring education indirectly, and of opening a door of entrance to the House of Commons to gentlemen of culture and intelligence who might not be disposed, in Alexander Hamilton's phrase, to submit "with unqualified complaisance to every sudden breeze of popular passion." By such a scheme as this, and in many other ways, a just and reasonable reform bill might be passed which would maintain the balance of the Constitution, and not expose us to the shame and American precedents. I should be content with any bill that in some shape or other would acknowledge the principle of social aristocracy, and make a manly protest against the degrading doctrines of American democracy. Nothing is certain—a reform bill in the direction of American democracy in this country at the present moment will lead, by an inevitable tendency, to the overthrow of the British Constitution. Where the ground is slippery and the atmosphere turbid, as in politics, great blunders are the most natural things in the world; but the consequences which follow on a one-eyed policy will not be retarded because the counsels of public men have been amiably hasty, perhaps, and their motives chivalrously pure. One false step made in the direction in which we are now moving can never be retraced. The same complexity of parties, the same complaisance with clamour, the same cowardly compromise with absurdity which may lead to the triumph of the present movement, will, in the course of another thirty years, lead to another instalment of American liberty; and then comes, according to Mr. Bright, Paradise; according to New York precedents, Pandemonium. Before a House of Commons nominated by trades unions and overawed by fervid demagogues the Constitution of this country would not last a year. The House of Lords, that wonderful incarnation of all that is stable, graceful, and chivalrous in society, would be voted an incubance; the Crown denounced as an expensive toy; and the multitude and mammoth—the mechanical forces and the material interests—would enter into the undisputed heirship of the world-renowned British Constitution. May God long preserve us from such a consummation!

Professor Blackie concluded amid loud cheering, many in the hall rising and waving their hats.

On Friday evening week Mr. Ernest Jones delivered a lecture in the Music Hall, Edinburgh, in reply to Professor Blackie.

Mr. Jones, who was enthusiastically received by a crowded audience, complained that Professor Blackie had treated the subject as if democracy signified the sole rule of the working classes, and not the rule of the whole nation. He maintained that, before the learned Professor could found upon the failure of democracy in heathen Athens or in pagan Rome, he was bound to show that there was no difference between them and Christian Britain in the nineteenth century. Before he could found on the case of republican France, he must show that there was no difference between a country bowed for seven centuries beneath oppression terrible to contemplate and our own, where

Freedom broadens slowly down
From precedent to precedent.

Before he could take the case of Australia, he must show there was no difference between glorious Scotland and the colonies to which gold-diggings lured the adventurous avarice of the world; and before he could anticipate the same results in Edinburgh as were found in New York, he must prove that the "seaside midden" which receives and retains the refuse of the world is on an equality with the north. He would, however, meet the Professor on the ground he had chosen. As to Athens, he quoted Herodotus and Grote to prove that under democracy she had risen to her greatest prosperity and power; that in Rome (as Macaulay stated) two centuries of prosperity, harmony, and victory followed the reconciliation of the orders and the passing of the Licinian laws; while under Rienzi democracy was the agent which made her parting glory linger a few brief hours. And now, he asked, what ushered in returning greatness to that classic land but democracy under Garibaldi, the foremost Democrat and the greatest man in Europe? In France democracy, whatever its excesses, which were brief, found the land held by a few nobles and the people starving; it turned it into six million freehold farms, and gave plenty to the people. True, a Napoleon now reigned—the cloud between one sunrise and another; but even he was obliged to disguise his Imperial mantle with the colours of the dawn, to reign in the name of liberty and truth, and to bow before the majesty of the people. As to Australia, its progress under democracy was at least an upward one; and from New York as pictured by Professor Blackie he would say turn to America. From New York, the one black spot on the face of the sun, from New York, with its population of Roman-Irish, the refuse of your monarchies and aristocracies, the men you have degraded by your class-rule in Britain, Germany, and France, turn to America as a whole, where education and morality stand higher than in any other country in the world. Strange that wherever democracy has reigned there has society reached its highest development—moral, social, and intellectual. Mr. Jones then spoke of the state of things at home, and in reference to trades unions claimed for them that they had carried the Ten Hours Bill, and wrested the concession of the factory schools. He spoke of the enlightened sympathies of the working classes, maintaining that Catholic Emancipation, the admission of Jews to Parliament, the extinction of West Indian slavery, free trade, the repeal of the taxes on knowledge, and reform were mainly supported by the classes it was attempted to exclude from political power. It was they who sided for the North and liberty, who demanded justice for Jamaica, who carried out co-operation against adverse laws, who met the charge of drunkenness with a temperance movement. Yet the working men were scarcely one in eight of the present constituencies. Now, on what ground was it proposed to exclude them? Was it education? The working classes, instead of wanting education to fit them for the franchise, needed the franchise to enable them to obtain education. In America, manhood suffrage had created the best-educated people in the world. Establish manhood suffrage, and in six months education would be made compulsory throughout the country. But on what ground was it proposed to exclude the working classes? It was said they would swamp the ten-pounders; but did not the ten-pounders swamp the twenty-pounders? and, as for the thousand-pounders, where were they? Why not winnow all the chaff from this Imperial corn, and let us be governed by a score or two of most immaculate Dean Pauls? This whole argument of numbers (said Mr. Jones) proceeds on a succession of fallacies. The interests of the working classes must be either identical with those of other classes or hostile to them. If identical, where is the danger? For, rest assured, men will look after their own interests in the long

run. If hostile, you will agree with me that good government is the greatest possible good to the greatest possible number; and that is a reason why "the greatest possible number" should have it in their power to look after their own interests. Again, you presuppose that all the working classes, on all questions, at all times, like one vast machine, would all vote one way at all elections; and, that being done, that their representatives would all, with the same regularity, vote one way in Parliament. Sir, there are as many diversities of opinion, as many conflicting interests among the working classes as exist in any other class of the community; and beneath such chimerical fears as these the rights and happiness of 20,000,000 of men, women, and children are trampled in the dust. But I maintain that manhood suffrage meets your very objection. It is the only means for obtaining the rule of a safe majority—the government of the better class—the only means for putting an end to corruption and intimidation. Show me any other mode for winnowing the chaff from the corn. How will you secure the good and exclude the bad from your constituency? Your property qualification does not. Witness Yarmouth and Totnes, St. Albans and Nottingham, Lancaster and Belgrave—the discovered criminals, we say nothing of the undiscovered. Your education test cannot. I presume all your present electors can read, and write, and cipher, or where's the use of your £10 test? and you see what they are worth. Indeed, Sir, our criminal calendars show that nearly all the more serious crimes, except those of highway robbery, are committed by persons who can read and write generally well. Now, manhood suffrage, though it may admit the bad (we exclude, of course, every convicted criminal), is certain to catch the good within its net. And I believe that the good are the majority of the human race in every Christian land. Were it otherwise, society could not go on. I believe that Christianity has not been sent on earth in vain. Wherever evil predominates States perish. Turkey dies, though you have tried to save it. Persia perishes, though it is almost unassailable. But democracy is not only the securer of the good—it is the purifier of the bad as well. Show me how you will stop corruption and intimidation without manhood suffrage and the ballot. Not by adding a few scores of voters to a depraved constituency. Instead of cleansing the latter you corrupt the former. You clear not the fetid pool by pouring in a few drops of crystal water; instead of thus purifying the polluted you pollute the pure. You must send the tide of the stainless river in before you can wash the corruption away. Test it by the present. Where are electors intimidated? Wherever they are few. Where are they corrupted? Wherever they are not too numerous to be bribed. Do you hear of venality or coercion in Birmingham or the Tower Hamlets? Even an approach to manhood suffrage, you see, reduces the evil. Add to it the ballot, and bribery and corruption are at an end. Where are the purses that could bribe the majority of 7,000,000 electors? and where is the fool to attempt it, when he could never tell how the man he bribed had voted after all? This great reform is needed, added Mr. Jones. Are we not walking in the downward path of Rome and mediæval France? Is not aristocracy doing here exactly what it did there? In Rome and in France wealth accumulated and the land was monopolised. Reform saved Rome from revolution. Revolution saved France from ruin. Which are we to have here—revolution or Reform? Mr. Jones, in speaking of the prospects of Reform, characterised the Whigs—the so-called Liberals—as the obstructives, the political adventurers, who kept Reform as an open question, because it kept political capital in their pockets, but who did nothing to settle it. He pictured two parties equally honest—the Tory and the Radical—between whom there must be a fight; but before that could come off it was necessary to sweep away the Whig who stood between. Although advocating democratic reform, he was not to be held as opposed to a partial Reform; he was ready to go along with any "honest man" who would offer a considerable or even a moderate measure of Reform. Mr. Jones, in conclusion, went into the Scriptural argument for democracy, holding that the law of Christ and the Apostles was that of equality and liberty. The first meeting of the Christian Church chose an Apostle by the vote of a majority; but the men who would carry out that plan in politics were called adventurers, demagogues, and enemies. The great want of the age was to have more of the spirit of the Gospel in our dealings, so that instead of severing class from class we should be drawing man to man. Whenever you recognise the golden rule you have democracy, for democracy is but Christianity applied to the politics of daily life.

On the motion of Mr. McLaren, M.P., a cordial vote of thanks was tendered to Mr. Jones; and thanks were also given to the Working Men's Institute for the opportunity of hearing the arguments pro and con, on the question of democracy, and to Mr. B. F. Dun for presiding.

The lectures on both sides have been published.

THE PRINCE OF WALES AND THE POLES.—We have much pleasure in recording an act redounding to the honour of the Prince of Wales's private character. While in St. Petersburg, during his late visit, he solicited of the Emperor of Russia, as a personal favour, the liberation of Count Stanislas Zamoycki (son of Count Andrew Zamoycki), confined in Siberia, which request was readily and gracefully acceded to. The Count has since returned to Warsaw, to the great joy of his family, who, no less than the whole Polish nation, feel most grateful to his Royal Highness for his noble conduct.

THE IRISH LAND QUESTION.—Mr. O'Beirne, the member for Cashel, proposes, in the coming Session, to ask Parliament to sanction what may be called an instalment of Mr. Bright's Irish land scheme. He will ask for a loan of one million—to be furnished from the deposits of the Irish savings banks—for the purpose of purchasing estates offered for sale in the Landed Estates Court. The land thus required will be resold in lots of not less than ten or more than one hundred acres—preference being given in the re-sale to the occupying tenants. In the notice he has put on the paper the hon. gentleman says his object is "to assist and encourage an independent proprietary of small freehold estates in Ireland."

MONEY PROSPECTS OF 1867.—Last year there was an unusual mercantile craving for new capital—keen and eager men were doing all they could, and more than they ought. Now all the eager are incumbered, and the slower more slow than ever. Our system of credit was last year in full and excellent work, whereas now it is wholly out of gear, and not likely to get right for a long time. The failure of such a house as Overend's must long impair the credit of other houses. In January, 1866, we were disposed to lend money to foreign nations; but now we are no longer so disposed. The finance companies, which at one time seemed likely to have a great effect as financial media between country and country, have now no effect at all. They bring out next to no enterprises to tempt capital abroad; and, if they did, would tempt none thither. We have thus examined two of the great features of the money market, capital and credit, and seen that they both tend to produce cheap money. It is the same with the third, bullion. There never was, we believe, so much bullion in the two banks of France and England before; and these two in conjunction contain the principal reserve treasure of commercial civilisation. As soon as industry declines, by a process which it is not easy to explain—at least, the magnitude and suddenness of it are most surprising—these two banks are filled with bullion. It was so after 1847 and 1857, and now, on a vaster scale, it is so again. This accumulation of bullion will for a long period aid the state of credit and the growth of capital in producing a low rate of interest. The value of money may, therefore, be expected to fall considerably lower, and to continue there till trade revives and credit is hardened. If the unusual sum in the hands of the Bank of England had been distributed among competitors giving an interest for it, and therefore eager to make use of it, the rate would be lower already than we see it.—*The Economist.*

M. MONTALEMBERT ON THE ENGLISH NATION.—The third volume of M. Montalembert's "Monks of the West" opens with a sketch of the English nation. His idea at once of their character, and of the causes that have moulded it, is expressed in the following passage:—"Despite of a thousand inconsistencies, a thousand excesses, a thousand foul blots, the English race is, of all modern races and of all Christian communities, the one which has best preserved the three fundamental bases of every society worthy of man—the spirit of liberty, the spirit of family, and the spirit of religion. How has this nation, in which pagan pride still survives and triumphs, and which has yet remained even in error the most religious of all the nations of Europe, how came it to be Christian? How, and by what hands, have these imperishable roots been implanted? The question is surely the most important of all those which history makes mention of, and its interest is the more important when we consider that on the conversion of England depended, and still depends, the conversion of many millions of souls. English Christianity was the source of the Christianity of Germany. From the depths of Germany the missionaries formed by the Anglo-Saxons carried the faith into Scandinavia, and among the Slaves; and day after day let the present moment, either by the fruitful expansion of Irish orthodoxy, or by the stubborn impulse of Protestant propagandism, Christian societies are created, speaking English and living English life, through the whole of North America, in both the Indies, in vast Australia, and among the islands of the Pacific. Over nearly half the world Christianity has flowed, or will flow, from the source which first gushed out from the soil of Britain. To that question we are enabled to reply with rigorous exactness. No people on earth have received the Christian faith more directly from the Roman Church, and more exclusively through the agency of the monks, than the English."

THE FASHIONS.

At the present festive season, when balls and parties are anxiously looked forward to by our fair friends, the ever-recurring topic of dress engrosses their attention, and the dictates of fashion on the subject of ball dresses will be gladly received by those who desire to create a sensation in the circles they adorn.

For evening dress all light materials are worn, but usually over a skirt of silk or satin. The trimmings are of lace, beads, and flowers.

The peplum or tunic is always adopted, and forms a very useful appendage to the wardrobe of a young lady, since, by the addition of two or three muslin skirts, a simple inexpensive change of toilet may be attained. Many young ladies wear corselets and tunics of foulard, and they have a very pretty appearance. For elderly ladies we are glad to find that broadened silks will be worn; satin is also much in favour. An elegant ball dress was of white satin, having in each breadth an ornament of green velvet leaves veined with gold. This trimming is wide at the bottom of the skirt, almost covering the breadth, and is graduated to the waist, where the leaves are smaller. The low body, with berthe of white chenille, edged with gold drops, has a wreath of velvet leaves round the shoulders. A wreath of leaves also forms the head-dress, forming a point on the forehead and resting on the chignon.

The following toilet, called the Four Seasons, is very recherché. The under skirt is of grey velvet, with white spots to imitate snow, and is trimmed with swansdown; over this is a tunic of white taffeta edged with a garland of grapes and vine-leaves. The corsage has a fringe of ears of corn and field flowers; the corsage, of green silk, is covered with a golden trelliswork, with a puffing at the top in which repose spring flowers, which also adorn the shoulders, and form the coiffure.

Another elegant and unique dress was a robe of white satin edged with a cord of orange silk. In each breadth were puffs of white tulle over an orange ribbon. Over this was worn an orange velvet robe, quite plain at the waist, in front, and at the back, but open at the sides, and arranged in large pleats. The sleeves were of the shape *moyen âge*, open to the shoulder, and hanging in a point below the waist, where it is terminated by a tassel. A white, pleated muslin bodice, with short sleeves, completed this toilet. The head-dress consisted of lacets of gold.

Another ball dress that attracted our attention was made of white Chambéry gauze; the under skirt striped with rose-coloured ribbons. The upper skirt, of the same material cut in scallops, was edged with rose ribbon and white crystal ornaments. Corslet of pink silk embroidered with pearls. Corsage of white muslin, with a rose ribbon run through the top round the shoulders. Coiffure of roses.

A white silk dress had three crossway bands of blue satin about 4 in. wide, on which were placed large pearl beads. A basque formed of white silk, trimmed to match the skirt, and cut in leaves longer behind than in front, where it is left open, is called the "Lotus basque," and is exceedingly pretty. A wreath of forget-me-nots is placed at the edge above the band of satin. The body is of the corslet shape, and is worn over one of white puffed-tulle, the puffs divided by wreaths of forget-me-nots. For walking dress, skirts of two colours are worn, but are not likely to be generally adopted. Silk and woollen reps, moirés, poul-de-soies, &c., still keep in favour. Stripes are worn, but are no longer plain, being formed of a small pattern or of medallions. Black, grey, and violet are apparently the favourite colours, and some beautiful shades of blue are worn. Skirts are not made so full as formerly, and many have been made quite plain at the waist; but, as this style is not becoming to all figures, it is not generally adopted. The fashion of wearing crinoline still prevails, but very greatly modified; one or two rows of steel at the bottom of the skirt is quite sufficient. For walking dress the jupon should be short: for evening attire it is long behind and of the train shape.

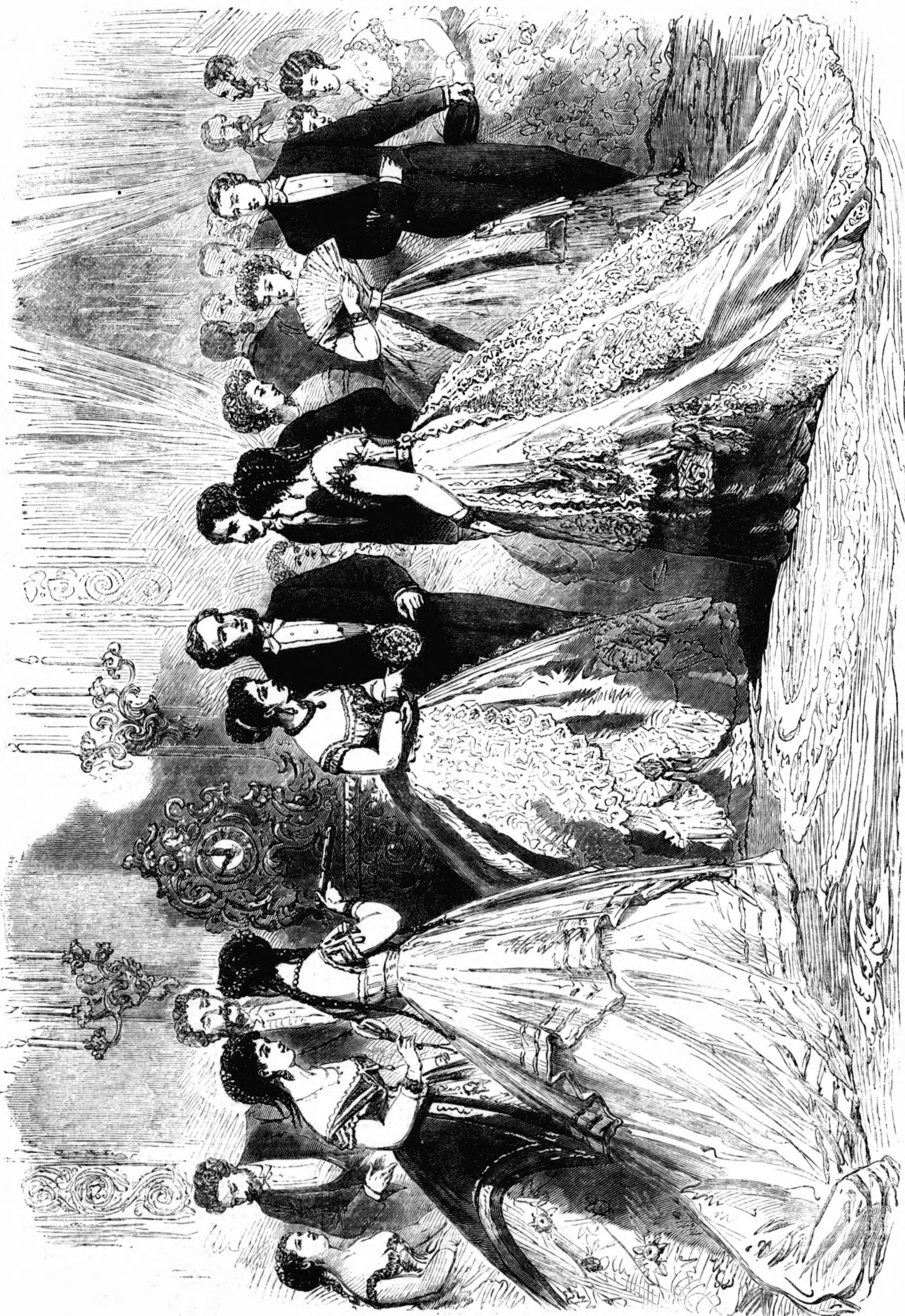
Shawls are no longer worn with a point at the back; they should be folded like a scarf.

There is no particular change in the shape of hats and bonnets. The Lamballe, Catalane, and Reine Hortense are still worn. Felt hats, trimmed with fur, or velvet toques, are very pretty for children. A chapeau lamballe, of black velvet, with puffs of white satin and crystal trimming, had strings of black velvet and bunches of white azaleas. A catalane bonnet of violet taffeta, with festoons of violet velvet, trimmed with black lace, jet gretots, and black velvet foliage. This is a very pretty and stylish bonnet. The strings are of violet ribbon, with velvet edge.

Paletots of last winter's fashion, neither tight-fitting nor quite loose, have been seen in Paris, and coloured paletots are also admissible. Always providing the colour corresponds either with the robe or the jupon, the material need not necessarily be the same. The sleeves of the fashionable paletots are long, and hang in deep points from the elbow. Trimmings of fur are very much worn.

THE GREENOCK COURTHOUSES.

THE courthouses at Greenock having proved quite inadequate for the large and growing business carried on in them, the Commissioners of Supply, some time ago, resolved to avail themselves of the new Act. The existing buildings were examined by Mr. Matheson, of her Majesty's Board of Works, on whose report they were condemned, and Messrs. Peddie and Kinnear were employed to prepare designs for a new building. There was considerable difference of opinion and discussion as to the best site, but that was ultimately fixed upon at the west end of Greenock, on the property of Kilblain House. This site was partly selected because it afforded ample space, not only for new courts but for a new prison, for which an equal necessity has long been felt. The plan of the new courthouses has been approved by the Secretary of State, and arrangements are now being made towards their erection. From a recent inspection of the plans we find that they contemplate a large and handsome building, forming, in general plan, a square of about 100 ft. each way. The principal front, towards Nelson-street, presents a façade of 100 ft. in length and three stories in height, with a massive tower in the centre. The tower is finished above, at the angles, with corbelled turrets, and is surmounted by a spire, which rises to a height of 112 ft. from the ground. The wide door which penetrates the base of the tower is flanked by columns with carved capitals and buttresses on each side, supporting the lower part of the tower. A boldly-moulded segmental arch springs from the capitals of the columns. Above the level of the street floor, and extending up to a level with the ridge of the roof, the tower is perfectly square, having no projection or break; but each angle of the front is recessed, and there is placed in the recess a large pillar or shaft, carved in a spiral form, giving force and character to the angles of the tower. Above the door is a large two-light window, with label and panel over it, and opening upon a stone balcony carved out above the doorway, having a parapet of cusped tracery. This window is on a level with the first floor of the building. Above it, and level with the second floor, are two windows, with plain segmental arched heads, having above and between them a large, circular, carved panel, with a shield on which will be engraved the arms of the town. On the level of the ridge of the roof, and at a height of 57 ft., the upper portion of the tower is boldly carved out and flanked with circular turrets, finished with conical-shaped roofs. From the corbeling rises a parapet, and behind and between the corbels the front of the tower is finished with a bold high gable, filled with a semicircular headed window of two lights, the gable being crocketed, and surmounted with a lion *sejant rampant*. The roof of the tower, beginning in a square form, becomes octagonal as it gradually tapers upwards to a height of 30 ft., from which altitude rises an octagonal lantern, with conical roof, the lantern having columns at each of the eight angles, with bold bases and capitals. The façade on each side of the tower shows a row of three windows on every story. Those on the ground floor have segmented arched heads, with label-moulding over them. Those on the first floor are simple square-headed windows. Above the first floor is a parapet carried on very bold corbeling, from which rises the upper tier of windows, projecting from the roof, and finished with gables furnished with crockets and finials. This portion of the building presents at each end a double gable. Between the gables rises a high ornamental chimney-stack; and flanking the gables on the outside are circular turrets, somewhat similar to those on the tower, between which the corbelled-out parapet is continued on the same level as that described in front. The turrets are supported on shafts



EVENING DRESSES FOR WINTER.

spirally cut, like those in front, and resting on the top of buttresses which extend up through the ground story of the building. On the north gable the principal feature is the great window of the staircase, extending through two stories, and divided into a large centre division of two lights and two side divisions of one light, each boldly moulded and finished with label-moulding. The other windows in the two ends are similar to those already described. In general style the building may be said to belong to the Scotch Baronial. It is similar in character to the buildings in our own Cockburn-street, but more ornate. The building, we have stated, is divided into two portions: the front portion, which extends back about 50 ft., being three stories in height, and containing offices for the Sheriff, the Sheriff-Clerk, the Procurator-Fiscal, &c., with a dwelling-house for the keeper. The entrance-hall is lighted, when the door is shut, by narrow windows on each side of the doorway. This hall is 16 ft. wide, 22 ft. in length, and runs into a corridor 17 ft. wide and about 60 ft. in length, having at one end of it the public staircase, giving access to the upper portions of the building. Opposite the door, at the further end of the corridor, is the Court-room, forming the back part of the edifice. This apartment is 47 ft. long by 38 ft. in width, and the roof is placed at a height of 31 ft. On each side of the court-house are narrower corridors, leading at right angles from the large corridor, and giving access to the different portions of the floor appropriated to the accommodation of the Judge, the jury, the witnesses, &c. The back building is only of one story, but it rises to the height of the second story of the front part of the building. There is a smaller courthouse situated, for the sake of convenience, in the front building. This apartment is on the right-hand side on passing through the door into the entrance-hall, and has rooms for the sheriff attached to it. The estimated cost of the whole building is between £9000 and £10,000. Offers have been invited, and as soon as they are accepted the work will proceed without delay. The building will be a great ornament to the town, which,

considering its importance and its wealth, has not many buildings with any pretensions to architectural beauty. The Greenock prison having also been long in a very bad state, it

has been resolved to take it down and build a new one. The ground at Kilblain House being sufficiently large for both buildings, and there being an obvious convenience in having them in juxtaposition, the new prison will be erected immediately behind the courthouse. Messrs. Peddie and Kinnear have also been employed to prepare designs for this structure, and the plans, having been approved by the Secretary of State, will shortly be carried into execution. The new prison, which is to contain about seventy cells, is a three-story building of plain exterior, but in harmony with the character of the courthouses, behind which it stands. The building has all the most recent improvements in prison arrangements. The cost is estimated at about £10,000.

THE HALL OF PUBLIC EXAMINATION IN THE NEW LYCEUM, VIENNA.

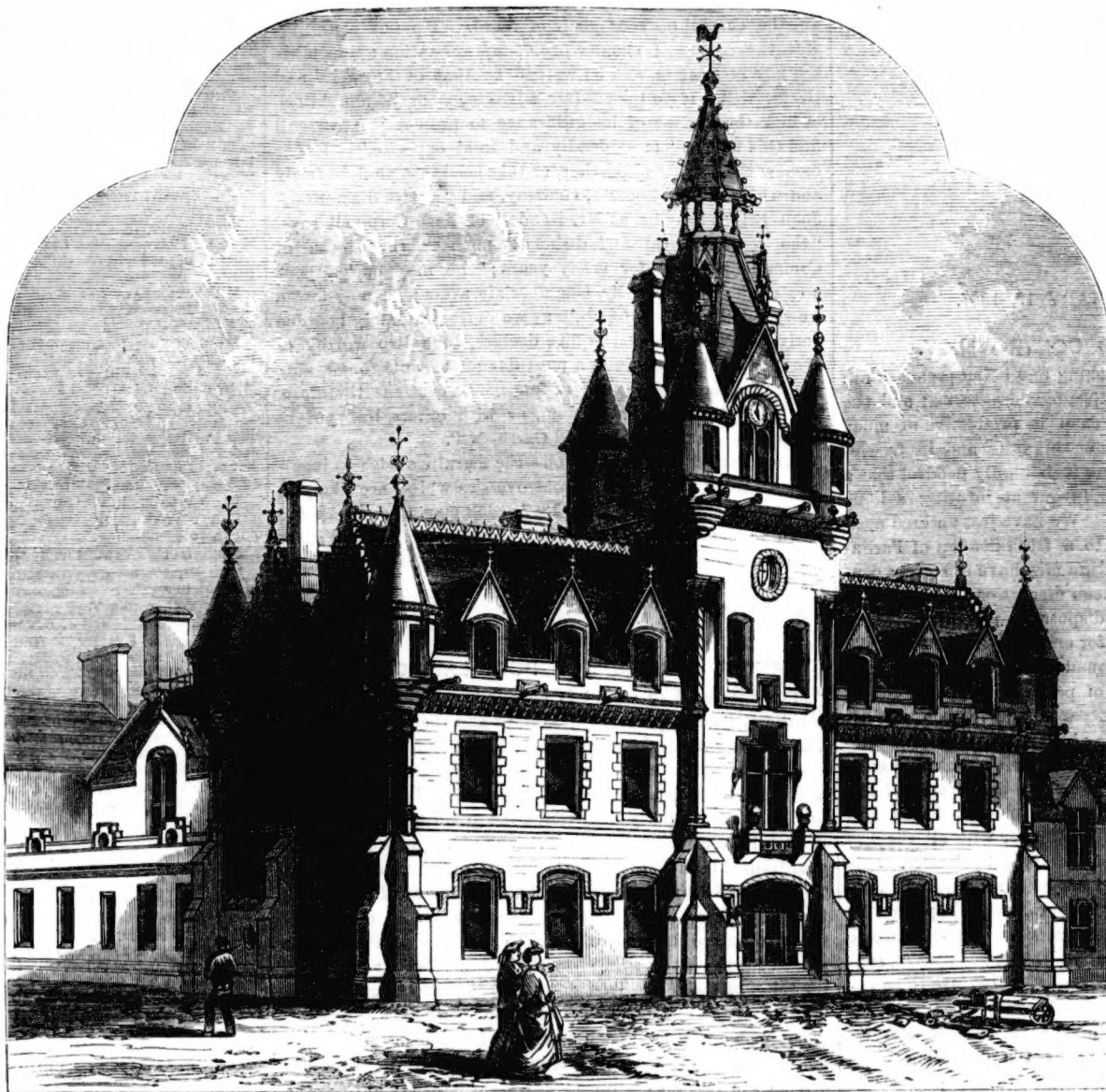
In Austria, as in France, the pupils of the Imperial Lyceum undergo periodical examinations of a public character, to which the friends and families of the scholars are invited.

Although, unlike the French military school, the Lyceum at Vienna confers no public prizes on its successful students, the occasion of the examination is of no small importance, and in the new building just completed a very fine hall has been devoted to this express purpose.

All the students are examined in every branch of study included in their various classes, and there is no special preparation made to coach them up in any particular direction.

The professors who have taught them during the year alternately question the pupils for about twenty minutes. For example, if a translation is required, some person amongst the audience is requested to name the book and chapter which shall be the subject of translation; and other branches of study are similarly treated.

The Viennese declare that their system is superior to that employed in the French Lycée, and anticipate remarkable results from the increased accommodation to the public in the new saloon represented in our Engraving.



NEW COURTHOUSES AT GREENOCK.—(MESSRS. PEDDIE AND KINNEN, ARCHITECTS.)



EXAMINATION HALL OF THE NEW LYCEUM AT VIENNA.

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AMENITY IN PUBLIC CONTROVERSY.

WE heartily dislike both preaching and being preached at: the last, because it is always disagreeable—to us; and the first, because we have rarely found it productive of much benefit—to others. But, really, at this time, and in face of some recent occurrences, we think it is highly needful that a word or two should be said in favour of infusing a little amenity into public controversy. We have just entered upon a new year, we shall soon be into a fresh Session of Parliament; and, whatever else the future may have in store, a considerable portion of sharp and keen discussion we are certain to have. Are all the probable disputants properly prepared and in a suitable frame of mind for engaging in the fray? We fear not; for what do we see around us?

In the Church the ministers of peace engaged in deadly warfare: party arrayed against party, and parson against parson; and on every side "all the currents of a heady fight" visible. Ritualists and anti-Ritualists heartily belabour each other. High Church and Low Church, in the persons of the most doughty champions on either side—Dr. Pusey and "S. G. O."—are tilting away at each other with all the *perfidum* usually characteristic of theological polemics. One contemporary tells us that spies have been set upon the Rev. Mr. Maconochie, of St. Alban's, Holborn, in the hope that he may be caught tripping on the side of over-Ritualistic ceremony; while another assures us that two laymen, supporters of Ritualism, have subscribed £1000 apiece to be expended in retaliating on the anti-Ritualists by prosecuting over-Evangelical divines—especially the Rectors of Marylebone and Islington—for breaches of the directions contained in the Rubric. The venerable but pugnacious Archdeacon Denison vehemently denounces the compulsory educationists of Manchester, together with the conscience clause, and even all modifications thereof. The drum ecclesiastic is being beaten in all directions; the Church militant everywhere stands armed to the teeth. There is no peace within the ecclesiastical borders. To the devout and sincere Churchman, a most painful and humiliating exhibition this. But how must the hearts of malignant Dissenters, schismatic Nonconformists, and wicked opponents of Church Establishments, leap within them for joy at the sight presented within the pale of the unhappy State Zion! Pass we by the theological cockpit, however; the themes discussed, and the combatants engaged, are perhaps too sacred to be touched by such merely profane hands as ours. Nevertheless, we must say that to see the pastors engaged in rending each other rather than in guarding the fold, though not a new, is a sorry spectacle, and one little fitted to contribute to the edification of the flock.

On what is passing in the realms of journalism and politics we may comment freely. First, and least, here is *Blackwood's Magazine*, the great Northern champion of Conservatism—Toryism we believe "Ebony" would prefer to have it called—falling into a grievous muddle, as we understand, in its anxiety to bespatter an opponent—Mr. Potter, of trades' union fame, to wit. Beginning by misnaming him, it goes on to misdescribe and misrepresent Mr. Potter's whole career. Pass we by that matter too. The quarrel between *Blackwood* and the unionist chieftain is a very pretty one as it stands; and may become prettier still by means of an action for libel.

Last, and most important: Bright-baiting is a pastime that has become extremely popular—and, within certain limits, safe too—with some classes of politicians lately. To "abuse John Bright" is a never-failing resource to Tory and Whig orators and scribblers when "gravelled for lack of matter." The member for Birmingham appears to be deemed fair game. And, perhaps, to a certain extent, justly so. Mr. Bright himself is not a dealer in holiday phrases; he is no way mealy-mouthed; he speaks his mind freely of public men and public measures, and, consequently, naturally provokes retaliation. But he never, that we are aware of, has condescended to attack private character, as some of his assailants have done recently. Moreover, Mr. Bright seldom troubles himself about small shots fired at him by nobodies. He "takes a deal of punishment" with indifference. But, when he does strike back, he hits excessively hard—straight out from the shoulder—and he has some friends who are almost as handy with their weapons as himself. Mr. Henry Danby Seymour, M.P. for Poole, and Mr. Richard Garth, new-made M.P. for Guildford, can answer for this. They have been "grassed heavily" by the redoubtable Birmingham wrestler and his seconds—

For life is Hugh of Lamberth lame,
Nor better John of Alton's fare.

Be there any more champions ambitious of performing an involuntary salute of their mother earth? Do any others, con-

fident in the strength of their youth, desire to "come in and try a fall?" Beware, beware, honourable and gallant gentlemen all! Before ye enter the lists, look well to your weapons and be careful of your mode of fence. Tip not your files with the poison of slander or misrepresentation; remember the fate of Laertes, and be warned by that of Seymour and Garth, M.P. If ye take unfair advantages, or be not skilful, or lack the armour of insignificance to protect you, ye will find this man a "most deadly and fatal opposite." Either eschew the combat altogether, or take heed that ye fight fairly and with candour, honesty, courtesy, and "a wise discretion." John Bright may be, as Mr. Kendall of East Cornwall says, "the most disloyal and dishonest member the House of Commons has seen for many years;" he may be "a poor creature," as the Rev. Mr. Chamberlain avers; he may be "a wewy mieththievous fellah," as we ourselves lately heard a burly and mature-aged squire declare, in a lisp worthy of Dundreary; but he is also a most dangerous antagonist, and, withal, exceedingly cunning of fence. Be cautious, therefore, how ye fight unfairly with him, or with others, lest ye get mauled like unto Seymour and Garth, M.P.

The point of this our sermon—the moral we wish to inculcate—is this: That, in the controversies which are likely to distinguish this year of grace 1867, each man who enters the arena to combat, whether with tongue or pen, should carry with him at least a reasonable measure of fairness, gentlemanly demeanour, and Christian charity; or—he may chance to rue else. Amen!

"TENDER MERCIES" OF POOR-LAW OFFICIALS.

"LIKE master, like man," is an adage which, we fear, is peculiarly true of poor-law guardians and their subordinates. The parishes of Clerkenwell and Bethnal-green have acquired special distinction even among the metropolitan parishes—and that is saying a great deal—for the stupidity, the harshness, and the illegality with which the guardians and officials in each have carried out the provisions of the poor law. The guardians of both these parishes have, more than once, neglected their duties in a very gross manner, and have rebelled against their superiors of the Poor-Law Board when an effort was made to induce them to conform to the Acts of Parliament passed for the better administration of the laws relating to the relief of the poor. And now it seems that the evil effects of the example thus set are manifesting themselves in a rather too palpable manner; the conduct of the masters is being imitated—as it is natural it should be imitated—in the spirit and to the letter by their men. Nay, it appears that the subordinates are even capable of bettering the instruction afforded them.

The Clerkenwell guardians shirked the duty of providing shelter for the casual poor as long as they possibly could find or invent an excuse for the neglect; and when at last they did so far comply with the law as to provide casual wards, they chose as their night porter a man who must be quite according to their own hearts. William Taylor, the official in question, had at one time been a member of the London police force, but had been convicted of an unprovoked assault, and expelled the force in consequence of this and other acts of violence. This, however, was the man selected by the Clerkenwell guardians to perform the delicate duty of deciding upon the claims of applicants for admission to the casual wards—a duty calling for the exercise of much discretion, calmness, and acuteness of observation. How William Taylor performed his duties was shown in cases lately reported in our columns, and which have formed the subject of investigation by one of the poor-law inspectors. Taylor's excuse for refusing admission to the persons mentioned in a paragraph in our Paper of the 29th ult., was that both the applicants, as well as the gentleman who took up their case, Mr. While—and whom Taylor described as the "third person"—were drunk; a charge which was clearly proved to be unfounded as regards Mr. While, and is positively denied as respects the casuals. This adding of insult to injury on the part of an admittedly rude, coarse, unsympathetic, and violent-tempered man, does not seem to have displeased the Clerkenwell guardians, for he still remains in office, and one of them—John W. Hopkins is his name—still thinks "the conduct of our official" quite right. The masters and men engaged in the administration of the poor law in Clerkenwell seem to be "very much alike," indeed.

We hope, however, that, faulty as they may be, the guardians of Bethnal-green will not consider "quite right" the conduct of their medical officer, Mr. Massingham, who could quietly read his newspaper and say "fiddle-de-dee" when informed that a poor creature to whom he was bound to minister was dying—and did die—for lack of aid in "woman's dread extremity." It is difficult to believe in the existence of such callous, heartless indifference to human suffering as this man Massingham exhibited. It must be his connection with the administration of the poor law that has made his heart hard as the nether millstone. It cannot be else. The members of the medical profession, as a rule, are honourably distinguished for the readiness with which they lend their aid in relieving pain and suffering, even—as is often the case—when they can have no hope of other reward than the approval of their own minds and the gratitude of poor sufferers. But Mr. Massingham is a glaring exception to the rule of conduct that generally obtains among his professional brethren. He not only gives no services gratis, he refuses to perform duties for which he is paid. Such conduct requires no comment; none but a poor-law official, debased by the evil example set before him and the evil influences

surrounding him, could have been guilty of it. The parish doctor of Bethnal-green can certainly boast of having bettered the instruction of his masters, the guardians, if that be an achievement to glorify one's-self upon.

SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

THE KING OF PRUSSIA has given, as a Christmas present, to Count von Bismarck, General von Roon, and Count von Moltke, some magnificent porcelain vases bearing his portrait.

THE PRINCE OF AUGUSTENBURG has issued an address releasing the inhabitants of Schleswig-Holstein from all their obligations to him, but reserving his own rights over the duchy.

MR. BRIGHT received the honour of a torchlight ovation the other night at Rochdale.

THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P., left Rome on Wednesday week for Florence. Mrs. Gladstone and daughters have arrived at Florence from Rome, and will remain there about a week. The younger sons are at Eton.

MR. TITUS SALT has given £5000 towards the Bicentenary Hall which the Congregational Dissenters are going to erect in London, and which is to cost £70,000.

LORD MONCK, Governor of Canada, and now on a temporary visit to England, has accepted an invitation from the Mayor of Portsmouth to a public banquet in recognition of his services as Governor of the colony, and especially during the so-called Fenian invasion of the Canadian frontier.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON, who is still at Brighton, is gradually recovering his strength; but, by the advice of his medical attendants, will not return to the active work of his diocese until after Easter. His Lordship's annual series of confirmations will commence in the course of the present month; but up to Easter they will be taken by Bishop Anderson and other Prelates who may happen to be in London.

LAND is selling in the City at near £70 a foot, or over £2,000,000 an acre.

FORTY TONS OF RUST were taken out of the Menai Tubular Bridge at one thorough cleaning.

JOHN DAY'S STABLES at Banstead have been burnt to the ground.

THE DIRECTORS OF THE MIDLAND RAILWAY have prohibited the sale of cigars in all the refreshment-rooms at their stations.

A RACE from New York to Cowes for 50,000 dols. is to take place between the pilot-boat Hope and J. D. Jones.

MR. CASTLE KELSEY, a Hull merchant, was robbed of £1200 in the Leeds corn market on Tuesday. Mr. Kelsey left his stand for a minute or two, and some thief carried off the money.

THE PRUSSIANs are so unpopular at Frankfurt, that when the burghers give a party they send out cards with "S. P." in the corner. This is meant for *Sans Prussiens*—no Prussians will be present.

THE FLEETS OF CHILI AND PERU were to leave Valparaiso at the latter end of November, for the purpose of attacking Spanish merchant vessels in the Atlantic.

THE GOVERNMENT, it is now said, never intended to take the telegraphic lines into their own hands and work them on the same principle as the Post Office.

AN EARTHQUAKE of considerable force and extent was felt in Algeria on the 2nd inst. Several villages were completely destroyed, thirty-seven persons killed, and very many injured.

JEM MACE, JOE GOSS, and three other less illustrious pugilists, have been sentenced by the Derbyshire magistrates to a month's imprisonment, with hard labour, for taking part in a prize-fight.

A FASHIONABLY-DRESSED LADY SHOPLIFTER was committed by Mr. Woolrych, on Tuesday, on a charge of stealing goods of the value of £7 10s. from a draper's establishment in Newtoning-causeway. She was stated to belong to a respectable family.

THE LIBERAL PARTY in the eastern division of the county of Norfolk have determined upon starting Mr. Edmond Wodehouse and Viscount Bury as candidates at the next election, in the room of Mr. E. Howes and Mr. J. C. Read, the sitting members.

THE GREAT EASTERN, now receiving a thorough refit at Liverpool, is appointed to sail from that port for New York on March 20. She will leave New York for Brest on April 9, and sail between France and the United States during the continuance of the Paris Exhibition.

THE PEOPLE OF FERMANAGH COUNTY, IRELAND, during the whole period of Fenian alarm, had £83,000 in their local savings-bank, which there was no disposition manifested to remove.

PRIVATE SAMUEL HODGE, of the 4th West India Regiment, has received the Victoria cross for his bravery at the storming and capture of the stockaded town of Tubabecolung, in the kingdom of Barra, River Gambia, on the evening of June 30 last.

THE CUNARD COMPANY, in view of the expiration of their contract for conveyance of the North American mails, have applied for extended dock accommodation at Liverpool, to meet the anticipated increase of the mercantile portion of their business with Halifax, Boston, and New York.

SEVERAL STUDENTS were arrested in Paris, some time since, on the charge of holding seditious meetings and belonging to a secret society. They have lately been tried, and on Monday were sentenced to imprisonment for terms varying from fifteen months to three months.

HER MAJESTY'S MINISTER AT WASHINGTON has been instructed, in reply to a communication received from the Government of the United States, to ascertain whether that Government is prepared to accept the principle of arbitration upon the pending differences arising out of the late civil war, provided that an agreement can be come to as to the points to which such arbitration should apply.

TWO JAMAICA GENTLEMEN who were ill-treated during the rising in Jamaica have brought an action against Mr. Eyre and Brigadier-General Nelson for damages.

THE SINGULAR BEINGS KNOWN AS "THE AZTECS," who were taken from Central America to New York in 1849, and brought to England in 1853, having now attained to adult age, were, on Monday, "married" by the registrar of the district of St. George's, Hanover-square.

EDUCATION IN SPAIN is very backward, as may be imagined from the fact that out of a total of 72,157 municipal councillors, no less than 12,479 are unable to read or write. Among the number are included 422 mayors and 938 deputy-mayors.

M. NICKLES, OF NANCY, has succeeded in obtaining a new substance, perchloride of lead. It is found to possess valuable qualities as a colouring agent for glass and other materials, and it supplies a hitherto wanting test in the detection of strychnine in certain combinations. It is also a test for morphine, and in a liquid form dissolves gold and platinum.

THE MONEY voted as an acknowledgment of the services of the Prussian Ministers and Generals was paid to them on Christmas Eve. Count Bismarck received £75,000; and the Minister of War, General von Roon, General von Moltke, General Herwarth von Bittenfeld, General von Steinmetz, and General Vogel von Falkenstein, £30,000 each. One account gives Bismarck £60,000, and von Roon £45,000.

THE ACT SUSPENDING THE HABEAS CORPUS ACT IN IRELAND will expire on the 26th of next month, at the end of twenty-one days after the commencement of the approaching Session of Parliament. It was the first Act passed last Session; and it may be anticipated that one of the first Acts to be passed next Session must be one for the further continuance of this exceptional measure for the protection of peaceable men.

IN NEW YORK it is estimated that the actual table expenses for each day for every man, woman, and child of the population averages 37 cents per head, divided as follows:—Meat supply about 16 cents; fish supply, 2 cents; eggs and poultry, 2½ cents; vegetables, 3 cents; fruit, 1½ cent; bread, 7 cents; tea, coffee, and sugar, 5 cents—the total sum expended daily by the city in eating, 370,000 dols.

THE POPE, in a recent address to the Tribunal of the Consulta, made the following remarks:—"We live in an evil time. Italy would appear to have the upper hand; but to advance she needs three things—head, money, and a compliant fiend who will carry her on his back. As to head, she has none, if we judge from actions; as to money, she is more beggared than we are; the fiend at first carried her, but is getting weary of the burden. This is why we should pray for her conversion."

A MAN, while ploughing up a headland on Chanton Farm, between Washington and Ashington, Sussex, felt his plough come against something which caused it to be thrown out of its course. It proved to be an old crock, or earthenware pot, containing a number of old coins, chiefly of the time of Edward the Confessor and Harold. They were all packed in the crock on their edges, as closely as possible, and had evidently remained undisturbed since first hidden. The Government authorities have been communicated with on the subject of the treasure.

THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT is one of the greatest publishers in Europe, and this is the time of year when volume after volume of imposing magnitude, ample margin, and portly type issue from its press. Official persons, senators, deputies, and others, to whom all these publications are sent, need a set of book-shelves on purpose for their storage. The thing is done in a most liberal way, with a great profusion of paper. It is said that about 6,000,000, are annually expended in Government printing and publishing.

THE YOUNG EARL OF ELDON, who has just come of age, has given £200 to the Devon County Hospital, £200 to the Small Benefices Fund, and £1000 to the Building Fund of the Dorset County School.

AN ENGINEER OF TRENT, M. Garollo, has invented a new needle gun, which fires fifteen shots a minute. The gun is 4 ft. long, weighs 7½ lb., and carries a ball ¾ litres in diameter.

THE LOUNGER AT THE CLUBS.

THE most astonishing piece of news which has come to us for a long time is that which the *Army and Navy Gazette* has lately given us—to wit, that the Lords of the Admiralty have informed Mr. Reed, the Chief Constructor of the Navy, that they intend to raise his salary, accompanying the information with a very flattering recognition of his services. There is nothing very remarkable in the fact itself that the salary of the Chief Constructor is to be raised. This salary is £900 a year; and, considering the high qualifications required, the serious responsibilities which the Chief Constructor has to bear, and the arduous labours which he has to perform, he is, perhaps, the worst-paid officer in the service. The First Lord has £4500 a year; three Naval Lords have, in addition to their half-pay, £1000 a year; one Naval Lord, in addition to his half-pay, has £1200 a year—this includes an allowance in lieu of a house. The First Secretary has £2000; the Second Secretary, £1500; the Controller of the Navy, in addition to half-pay, £1300; and the Accountant-General, the Storekeeper-General, and the Controller of Victualling, each £1300. Now, compared with these salaries, the Chief Constructor's salary is certainly low. The Duke of Somerset wished to raise it; and he would have done so, but during his tenure of office there was such a storm raging in the House of Commons against Mr. Reed that the First Lord did not think it prudent to propose a change. But now, strange to say, the very men who blew up the storm and kept it raging have themselves made the proposition, and accompanied it with a flattering recognition of the services of the man whom for long years they had so pertinaciously abused. This is the remarkable fact—not that the salary is to be raised, but that these, the fierce and uncompromising opponents of Mr. Reed, should raise it. Outsiders who are ignorant of the workings of Government by party will naturally ask how this is. The explanation which will most readily occur to the public mind is that these gentlemen were ignorant of Mr. Reed's merits—were, in short, led away by false reports; but that when they got to know the real facts they changed their minds. Well, this is plausible enough; but I am afraid it is not the truth. The fact is, I apprehend, that the long-continued abuse of Mr. Reed was only the carrying out of a well-recognised policy of party government—that the outs are to censure the ins, and the ins are to return the compliment to the outs. Sir John Pakington and Sir John Hay and their followers had no enmity to Mr. Reed, but by firing at him they hoped to damage the Government. He was a sort of projecting outwork, and by pounding at him they hoped to make a breach and seize the citadel. The one great object of a party out is to get in; that of those in is to keep "the other fellows" out; and in the attainment of these objects the combatants are never very scrupulous. If anybody stand in the way he is ruthlessly run down; if the road is never so dirty you must plough through it—"through dirt to dignities," as Bright, with his usual force, phrases it. In short, all things are fair in party as in military warfare. Sir John and his allies thought no more of shelling Mr. Reed than a military commander would of firing a village that stood in his way. It will be remembered that, not long ago, Mr. Stansfeld was shelled in this way, and knocked over. But think you that the Conservatives really cared a whit about Mr. Stansfeld or his connection with Mazzini? Not a jot; all they wished to do was to damage him that they might damage the Government. This is not very lofty morality, your readers will say. Nor is it; but it is the morality of party warfare; and so long as we are governed by party, I am afraid we must expect no higher. Sometimes in my Utopian dreamings I imagine a government by the wisest men, irrespective of party. But that certainly will not come for many a year ahead. Meanwhile it is satisfactory to see that when a party has conquered office, and taken upon itself the responsibilities of the State, it will not sacrifice the welfare of the State merely to be consistent. Mr. Reed quite expected when the Conservatives came into power that he should have to resign; but lo! he finds his services recognised, and his salary raised. "But what a cheek," as my old friend Blagg said the other day, "our fellows must have! I felt sure that, after all that had happened, they could not keep Reed in. But then, you know," he added, "I have always said that one of the prime qualifications of a party leader is cheek." You must excuse my friend's cant word for its expressiveness.

I have just received a curious return moved for by Mr. Seely in August last, just before Parliament was prorogued, and delivered since. The questions embodied in the motion were as follow, and I affix to the questions the answers:—"1. When did the Favourite last sail from England to North America?"—Answer, "April 24, 1866." "2. Had she any steel or chilled-iron shot or shell on board?"—Answer, "No." "3. Have any steel or chilled-iron shot or shell been since sent to her; and, if so, how many, and where?"—Answer, "None have been sent; but 1539 chilled shot for 7-in. guns have been issued to Halifax for land service; and they could, on an emergency, be made available for the Favourite." "4. If none have been sent, is it intended to send any, and when?"—Answer, "Steel shot and shell for the Favourite will probably be ready in about the second week in September, and they will then be shipped to Halifax." The meaning of all this is, that the Favourite, 10-gun ironclad, was sent to her station with guns and powder, but no shot. The 1539 chilled shot at Halifax go for nothing; for, if an emergency should arise, they will of course be wanted on land. It would seem from this return that, notwithstanding our vast naval expenditure, we cannot get shot for our ordinary service. What if a war should break out suddenly? Fancy an enemy in sight, and a British ironclad turning tail and steaming away, because it has no shot aboard! I would like to know how many more ships there are afloat without shot.

I was not much surprised by Mr. Danby Seymour's escapade. I do not imagine that he deliberately intended to misrepresent and slander Mr. Bright; for, the truth is, Mr. Seymour never does anything deliberately. He has what I may call a harum-scarum mind—if I may use a colloquial word—colloquial, but in the dictionary nevertheless, with these meanings attached—wild, rash, precipitate, giddy; a mind, in short, that never can deliberate and reflect. There are many such minds in the House of Commons. They are in some cases clever enough, and occasionally acute; but they are restless, unsteady, and as utterly incapable of quietly pondering a subject and studying it to discover all its bearings and ramifications, as a swallow is of settling long upon the ground. Mr. Bernal Osborne has a mind of this sort; and hence it is that, charmed as we are by his wit and moved to laughter by his rollicking fun, nobody thinks of trusting to his facts or taking his logical conclusions without careful examination. And Mr. Danby Seymour is like unto Osborne—minus, though, his wit and jokes. Mr. Seymour, like Mr. Osborne, seizes hold of apparent facts, never pondering and examining them to ascertain whether they really be facts. It is enough for him that they have been passed to him as sterling coin and that they have the outward appearance of it. I suppose that there is no man in the House whose facts need critical and careful examination more than those of Mr. Seymour; and, of course, the same peculiarity of mind leads him to reason incorrectly; for, if a man cannot calmly and quietly study and ascertain the truth of his premises, you may be sure that he cannot reason justly. Now, it is not easy to reason correctly upon sound premises; but if the premises or facts be all wrong, and the reasoning all wrong too, you get into the most perplexed of embroglios. This, then, is the character of Mr. Danby Seymour's mind. It is, as I have ventured to call it, a harum-scarum mind; and if you will take the trouble, in the light which I have given you, to read his article and letters, you will find that, strange as they are, they are not unaccountable. Nobody capable of reflecting could have thought that Mr. Bright said that all the land of Scotland is in the hands of twelve proprietors, nor that he expressed a wish that the poor ought to legislate for the rich. Five minutes' reflection would have convinced Mr. Seymour that there must be some mistake in both cases, but that is exactly what Mr. Seymour is incapable of giving to any subject. His mode of getting out of his difficulty is equally characteristic, as you will see if you examine it. I have no space to go into that matter.

The Lancaster Election Commission has at length closed its labours, after sitting thirty-five days, and, of course, costing a "pot of money." The bribery has been on the most extended scale, as it appears that at the last election, out of 1371 persons who voted, no less than 900 had been bribed. A very pretty state of affairs, truly, and one calling loudly for reform of some sort or other. What action Parliament may take on the report of the Commission remains to be seen. Disfranchise the borough, probably; but will that stop corruption, or only transfer operations to another scene? If bribery is to be eradicated from our electoral system, more radical measures than partial disfranchisements are needed, I fear. Meanwhile I cannot help looking upon these Royal Commissions as something very like expensive farces.

The advocates of reform in the constitution of the governing bodies of the metropolis have had their hands strengthened in a remarkable manner within the last few days. The general inertness, or helplessness, of the existing authorities in face of the snow-storm of last week, and the inconveniences it occasioned, have exhibited in a more striking light than ever the defects of the present machinery and the necessity for an improvement. Parish vestries, surveyors, and contractors would be greatly benefited, I think, by a little instruction under such a master of discipline as Napoleon I.; for they require to be taught that, not only the word "impossible," but the word "difficult" should be expunged from their vocabulary. Indeed, they do not seem, as a rule, to be capable of distinguishing between the signification of these two phrases: whenever a thing is admitted to be difficult, they immediately pronounce it to be impossible, and then deem themselves justified in taking no further trouble in the matter. The task of clearing the snow from the streets of London last week, and thus making them passable, was acknowledged to be a hard one; and so the bulk of our local officials declared it impossible of performance, and waited for Providence, or the elements, to do their work for them. In one parish—St. Pancras—there was an exception to the general supineness. Mr. W. B. Scott, the district surveyor; Mr. Worrell, the chief clerk; the deputy surveyors, and other officers, manfully grappled with the necessities of the time, and by dint of vigorous and united action cleared the main thoroughfares of the district of the snow. All honour to the officials of St. Pancras, and thanks to the local board of works for sustaining them in the course they took! But how shall I characterise the deliverances of such parochial Solons as Mr. Eldridge and Mr. John Taylor? Wise men of Gotham, they! Mr. Eldridge "could not imagine a more extravagant bit of madness than that of clearing the snow away, for if they had let it alone it would have melted away of itself." Really now! No ghost from the grave is needed to tell us that, Mr. Eldridge. It only required time and a thaw, and a thousand pounds would have been saved to the parish. True! But what about the inconvenience and discomfort of the public in the meanwhile? By the same reasoning, it is mere waste and folly to clean the streets at all, seeing that the mud and other filth may be washed away in course of time—if enough rain falls; or blown away—in dust—if sufficient sunshine and wind are vouchsafed us any time between now and next Christmas. Mr. John Taylor is a great humanitarian, and he would have had all the St. Pancras contractors "locked up for bringing out their horses in such weather." Rare kindness of heart this! But does it not occur to Mr. John Taylor that the poor human animal is entitled to some consideration? Men and women, and young persons too, were forced to go out in "such weather;" and it was positive cruelty to leave them to toil along the streets in the condition in which they were allowed to remain last week. I fear that not even the presence in them of such wisacres as Mr. Eldridge and Mr. John Taylor will save the existing local boards from being set aside by other and more efficient organisations.

Unless I am much misinformed, *Blackwood* has fallen into a sad error in an article including a sketch of the biography of Mr. Potter, which has been quoted by several of your contemporaries. In this article it is alleged that Mr. Potter, having been employed by Messrs. Smith, the builders, was "found utterly worthless as a workman," that he was "forced to earn a subsistence by becoming a waiter," and afterwards failed as an employé of a railway. I have good reason to believe that all these assertions are entirely untrue. In the article, by-the-way, the subject of it is named Thomas Potter, whereas the person obviously indicated is well known as George. Perhaps this blunder may afford a clue to the cause of the extraordinary misstatements contained in the article, of which it is not improbable that the public may, ere long, hear more in the course of an interesting trial of an action for libel. The *Standard*, I see, has had to eat "humble pie," and apologise for quoting *Blackwood's* misstatements. Your contemporary is severe upon scurrilities in discussion, but would do well to correct his own defects in this way ere he condemns the faults of others: *vide* his remarks on Mr. Bright on Thursday last, where he is guilty of something very like a misrepresentation of the hon. member's language.

I have wandered among the ruins of the Tropical Department of the Crystal Palace, and the sight has depressed me. About a fourth of the Alhambra Court has been destroyed; but the rest is not only uninjured to a great extent, but even unblackened—a thing which is almost incredible by those who saw, as I did, the flames on that fatal Sunday raging in the arched roof, where there was no timber to feed them, but where the film of paint on the iron, overheated by the general conflagration, caught light and carried on the destruction. An investigation is scarcely safe, for the charred timbers crumble under your feet; and only a short space of time before I arrived one of the Aboo Simbel figures had succumbed to the influence of thaw after frost and tumbled to the ground piecemeal. The fountains may be considered uninjured as compared with the damage done elsewhere. The mass of twisted and rent iron and molten glass, the scorched stems of trees and shrubs, bear witness to the violence of a conflagration which, even in broad daylight, shot up a volume of flame discernible for miles. Those who remember what a delightful retreat the Tropical Department was, removed from the bustle of the rest of the palace, rich in rare plants, and melodious with the song of strange birds, can appreciate the sense of desolation I felt as I wandered on Monday among the ruins. I do most sincerely hope that every effort will be made by the public to restore the palace—a national monument—to its pristine state. Its supporters cannot be accused of a commercial spirit for gain, so they should be protected against inordinate loss, even if it were by a grant in Parliament, though that, by-the-way, has never yet proved an unmixed benefit.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

THE MAGAZINES.

The literary topic of the week is the death of Mr. Alexander Smith, which is a thing to sadden any writing man. Nobody who looked closely at a "Spring Chanson" of his, which appeared in the *Argosy* some months ago, could fail to see that he had made way as a poet. For my part, I always regretted to see him writing prose at all. The "Life Drama," with all its preposterous faults, indicated the vocation of the man; but the more serious influences under which he came in later years complicated his mental growth and did him harm as a poet. I believe no one was more conscious than himself that his natural course of development had been interfered with by "circumstances over which he had control," but had not the moral courage to exert it.

Apologies of the *Fortnightly Review* and the Bright-Seymour business, a second letter from Mr. Seymour has pushed the matter one step further, and now we have a complete, if negligently and roundabout, acknowledgment of error on the part of the "Liberal M.P." This affair was rather an unlucky legacy from the old dynasty to the Morley dynasty. Mr. G. Whyte Melville's story, "The White Rose," is, of course, of much lower rank than Mr. Meredith's "Victoria" was; but then, people will read it. Mr. Bagehot concludes, in the present number, his studies of the English Constitution. The "Causerie" of the editor is very agreeable, and something more.

In the *Contemporary Review* we have the first of a series of papers

on Mr. Robert Browning (from a pen which there is no mistaking). They are sure to be good; and the opening wants only force; the writer has a reticence which is more than clerical; it is almost lady-like. He is in error in supposing "Strafford" to be the only play of Mr. Browning that has been acted. "A Blot in the 'Scutcheon'" was acted at Drury Lane in 1842 or 1843, with Miss Faucit, Mrs. Stirling, and Mr. Phelps in the leading parts; and "Colombe's Birthday" has been acted at the Haymarket within these few years. From, as I judge, the same pen, there is a good notice of Mr. Hunt's "Essay on Pantheism;" but the writer does not tell us how to escape duality of conception. Does it not occur to him that this is wrong by defect only, and that triplicity of conception is, in fact, inevitable?

The *Christian Spectator* says, "Mr. Martineau's Unitarianism has developed into a mild Theism." May I ask, since when? I have read a sermon of his delivered within a year which the *Christian Spectator* would have printed as an article if it had been sent to it—a sermon which maintained the perfection and place of Christ in terms which many readers would take to cover the doctrine of the Incarnation. I did not read his article on Rénan, in the *National Review*; but I saw a short extract from it, and it certainly could not have been written by a man who was merely "a mild Theist." And I write this with a sufficient knowledge of the reserves of phraseology common in such writing. By-the-by, though, the Duke of Argyll has not such a knowledge. I glanced at his work for the first time the other night, and was surprised to find him falling into a trap of verbal evasion on the part of—never mind for this week! His Grace is too solemn. If he had had any fun in him he would have seen through the trick.

In *Macmillan*, Mr. Palgrave quotes Keats as writing:—

The music groaning, like a god in pain.

This looks like a mere misprint for "yearning;" but then the article is one which Mr. Palgrave must have read in proof.

In *Good Words*, the author of "David Elginbrod" begins a new story—"Gild Court"—which opens very nicely and bids fair to be the pleasantest love-story going. How young in heart is this fine, sweet-souled writer!

THEATRICAL LOUNGER.

I am afraid that I must admit that the DRURY LANE pantomime has not been put upon the stage as it deserves to be. Mr. Blanchard has written it very carefully, and its drawbacks are in no way attributable to him; but the dresses are seedy when compared with those of former years, and the scenery is ineffective. The opening scene is extremely well written and fairly put upon the stage. The others are also well written, but presented in a very slovenly fashion to the audience. I was sorry to fancy that I recognised several old familiar faces among the masks; but here I may be mistaken. The transformation scene is good, in the abstract, but not up to the mark of former transformation scenes at this theatre. The harlequinade is bustling, but not otherwise worthy of notice. What a pity it is that enterprising pantomimists don't devote a little more attention to the invention of new tricks! I remember that the pantomimes produced at the Princess's and other theatres in the days of Mr. Maddox were always remarkable for the ingenuity of the tricks in the comic scenes; but this special department of pantomimic art seems now to be entirely neglected. It was the only thing that made the comic scenes worth sitting out. Now they are simply unendurable.

The pantomime at ASTLEY'S is too long; but it is handsomely dressed, and is the medium of setting before the audience a great number of pretty young ladies in very handsome costumes. The scenery is well painted, and the "business" of the scenes is capably arranged. The most amusing scene in the piece is the palace of the King of Lowther Arcadia, in which hundreds of children, dressed as toy soldiers, go through the evolutions proper to a review. The prettiest scene in the piece is the transformation scene, which is designed in excellent taste by Mr. Hicks. I have seen a great many transformation scenes; and I have come to look upon them rather as bores than otherwise; but I must admit that the Astley's scene surprised me considerably. I was particularly struck by Mr. Hicks's good taste in avoiding those violent and startling contrasts of coloured foil which go far to spoil the effect of many displays of the kind. The harlequinade is up to the mark, but not beyond it. Mr. Rowella is a very excellent Clown—and a very brave fellow into the bargain, for he was the Clown who distinguished himself so notably at the burning of the Surrey, two years ago. The pantomime is quite successful.

THE HAYMARKET has discarded burlesque and pantomime for the present, and offers, as the principal attractions of the evening, a three-act comedy by Mr. Tom Taylor, called "A Lesson for Life." I remember seeing this piece three or four years ago, when it was played by the Civil Service Amateurs at the Lyceum and St. James's Theatres. I then thought it a very charming play—rather too didactic, perhaps, but otherwise unexceptionable. Since that time it has fallen a victim to the dread necessity of "writing up" several minor parts, in order to make them worthy the acceptance of the actors who are to play them. An idiotic valet, badly played by Mr. Clark, is made to run through the piece, in order to afford Mr. Sothorn and Mr. Howe an opportunity of chaffing him in an ungentelemanly and ridiculous manner. Lord Greystoke has also been elaborated—and thereby ruined. Harry Vivian, now played by Mr. Sothorn in his hardest and most unsatisfactory style, was, as I remember him, a gentlemanly scapegrace; in Mr. Sothorn's hands he is an unmitigated cad, insulting every lady whom he meets in a manner which would ensure his being kicked out of any gentleman's house before he had been a day in it. Mary Ford, the heroine, is charmingly played by Miss Nelly Moore. Mr. Chipendale is a very stagey old Vicar.

A COLLIERIES' STRIKE.—A strike of a noteworthy character has just occurred at the Edmund's Main Colliery. About two years ago there was an explosion at this place, which resulted in the loss of many lives. The recent and more terrible disasters at the Oaks Colliery, in the same district, and at Talk-o'-th'-Hill, have had the effect of making the men look more to the adoption of measures for the prevention of explosions than they have done hitherto. One of the greatest dangers in gassy mines arises from the use of gunpowder in blasting. The men at the Edmund's Main, wishing to do away with this cause of danger, have just asked for such an increase of pay as will enable them to obtain about the same amount of wages by the slower process of getting coal without blasting as they can now by the more expeditious method. Their demand not being acceded to, the men remain out on strike.

PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE.—Mr. Sampson Low, jun., the secretary of the Royal Society for the Protection of Life from Fire, has presented a report on the number of fires attended by the fire-escapes belonging to that society during the past year. He states that the number of calls to fires received have been 824, of which 111 were chimneys on fire, 103 false alarms, and 610 fires. The society have eighty-five fire-escape stations, each one attended throughout the night by a conductor, and which extend from Holloway to Clapham, north and south, and from Bow to Kensington, east and west. The entire force of the society numbers a hundred strong—viz., eighty-nine conductors, six supernumeraries, and five inspectors. Forty-eight persons have been rescued during the year from fire and forty-one from suffocation. A fire in Catherine-street, Strand, Conductor Christianson rescued an Italian named Yoli by means of the escape. The man was just about to precipitate himself from a third-floor window, a height of nearly 50 ft., when the conductor arrived. Conductor Douglas saved nine persons from a fire in St. George's-in-the-East on March 2 last. He found them in an attic, and, one by one, guided them down the escape, assisted by a police-constable. The conductor was awarded the society's silver medal, and the policeman who assisted him received a testimonial and a present of money. Conductor Shaw rescued four persons from a fire in Wilderness-row; Arnold four from a fire in Wells-street, Oxford-street; Hutchins and Silk eight from a fire in Hampstead-road; and Hayward and Wood five from a fire in Spitalfields. The last-named conductor has saved fourteen lives during the year, and many other conductors six. Several intervening and outlying localities in London and the suburbs still require to be supplied with stations, but during the last eighteen months the society have given all their attention to sustaining and strengthening their force, so that when called upon to relinquish their arrangements for the protection of life to the Metropolitan Board of Works, as contemplated by the recent Fire Act, it may be in as efficient a state as possible. For the present, the continuance of this valuable force is entirely dependent upon voluntary contributions.



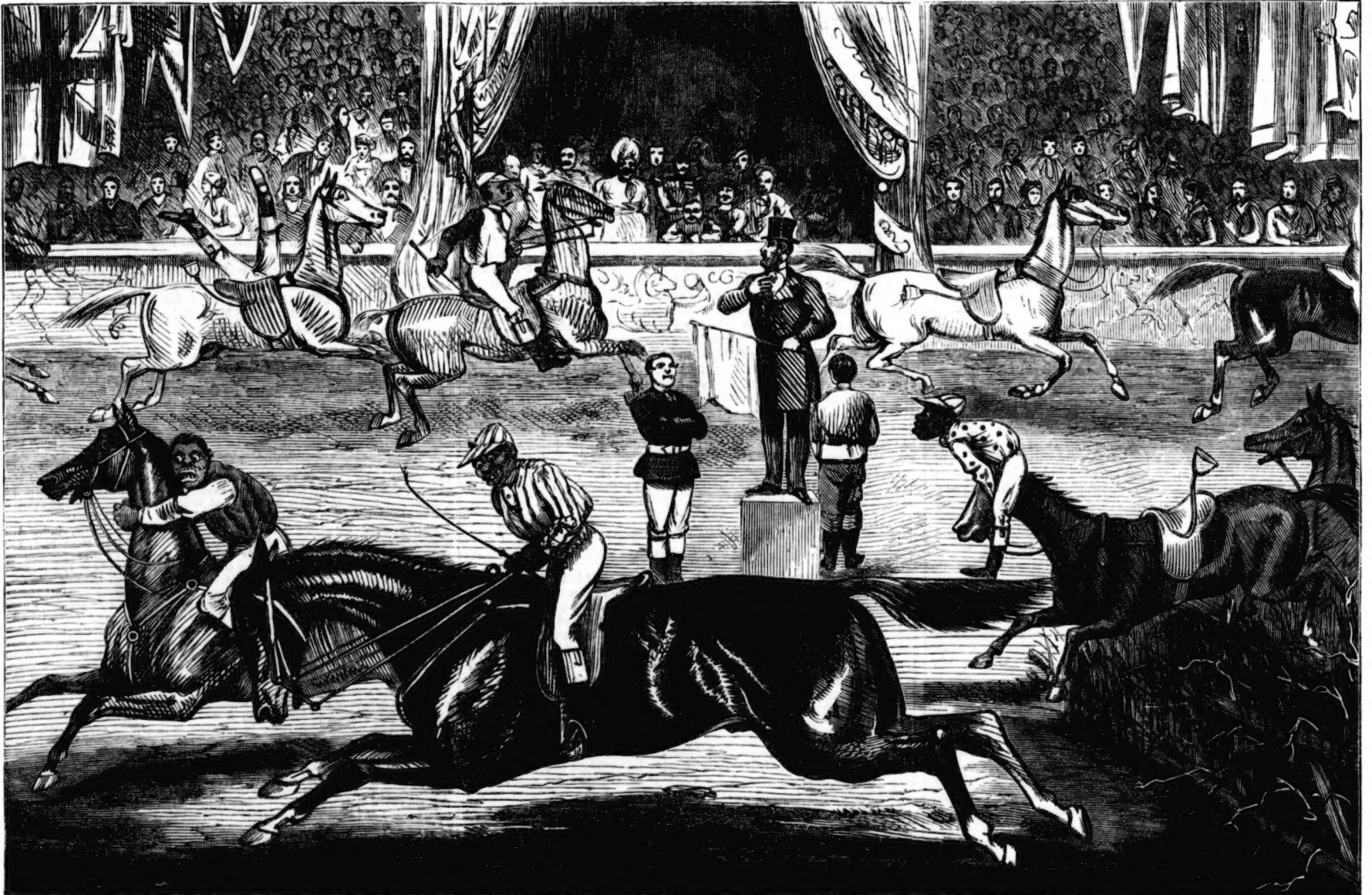
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, CROYDON, RECENTLY DESTROYED BY FIRE.

DESTRUCTION BY FIRE OF CROYDON CHURCH.

THE ancient parish church of St. John the Baptist, at Croydon, was on Saturday night last almost totally destroyed by fire. The sacred edifice is situated in the lower portion of the town, at the end

of Church-street, near to the old palace of the Archbishops of Canterbury, and was of great antiquity. It has always been regarded as one of the finest examples of ecclesiastical architecture in Surrey. The building was surmounted by a lofty tower of flint and stone; and the pillars and arches in the interior formed a

splendid arcade. In the chancel were some monuments of remarkable antiquity and beauty, and among them those of Archbishops Sheldon, Grindal, and Whitgift. Archbishop Sheldon's monument in marble was considered one of the most perfect pieces of sculpture in the country. Only a short time since the in-



SANGER'S CIRCUS, AT THE AGRICULTURAL HALL: RACE WITH NEGRO JOCKEYS.



"THE FROZEN MILLPOND."—(FROM A DRAWING BY GEORGE WILKS.)

terior of the church was restored and beautified at a very large expense. The fire, which is supposed to have originated from the overheating of a flue near the communion-table for Sunday service, was first discovered at about half-past ten o'clock. As speedily as possible the engine of the Croydon Volunteer Fire Brigade was upon the spot; but a considerable time elapsed before any supply of water could be obtained. When the local board's engine arrived it was found to be useless, owing to its machinery being frozen. So rapid was the spread of the flames, that in an hour the building was a complete ruin. During the progress of the fire, Fireman Lancaster, of the local board's brigade, received a compound fracture of the leg from a portion of the ruin falling upon him. The parish papers and the communion plate were saved. The church was insured for about £10,000; but it would require treble that amount to rebuild so substantial and noble a structure.

We are indebted for the following particulars regarding this ancient church to a correspondent who signs himself "W. B.," and who says that the notes supplied are from an unpublished work which he has prepared on the churches of Surrey:—

"The parish church of St. John the Baptist, at Croydon, was a large and important building, standing at the bottom of the town, near the source of the River Wandle. It was the second finest church in the county, giving place only to St. Saviour's, Southwark. It was uniformly in one style of architecture—Early Perpendicular—and was supposed to have been built by Archbishop Chicheley, temp. Henry VI. It consisted of nave, with aisles and north and south porches, three chancels, a sacristy, and west tower. The materials used were flint exteriorly and stone within, filled up with chalk and rubble. The building was much injured about thirty years ago by a coating of compo, which was plastered over the whole church, except the tower. Parts of this compo have lately been removed from the north side and the original flint exposed. The tower (still standing) is lofty, but looks less lofty than it is from its massiveness. It is in five stages, the lowest containing a moulded doorway under a square hood, with Chicheley's arms in its spandrels. Above it is a broad but not lofty window of five lights. The third and fourth stages contain a small window of one light on each face; and in the highest stage, also on each face, a lofty window of two lights, transomed. Each face of the tower has two fine rectangular graduated buttresses; the top is battlemented, and at each angle rise small embattled octagon turrets, from which rise crocketed pinnacles. The newel stair is at the north-east.

"The church underwent a restoration by Scott in 1851, when new clerestory windows were inserted, the tower arch opened to the church, the roofs renewed and elevated, and the whole new-seated and fitted up with a great degree of comfort and elegance. The north porch dated only from 1829. Its inner doorway was ancient, with quatrefoiled spandrels. The south porch (little injured by the flames) is large and ancient, and unrestored. Above it is a parvis chamber and a small square tower containing a stair. This porch has a groined roof.

"The windows of the nave—five on the north and four on the south sides—were lofty and uniform, each of three lights transomed with plain but rather uncommon head-tracery. The new clerestory windows were square-headed, of three lights each, all filled with modern quarried glass. The interior of the church was striking and very fine. The nave was separated from the aisles by light, lofty, clustered columns, supporting on each side five nobly-moulded arches. An embattled stringcourse ran above them in the place of a triforium. The main chancel arch, of the same design as those in the nave, was very lofty and cathedral-like. The centre chancel was divided from the side chancels by two arches, continuations of those in the nave, and of the same height and breadth; also by modern perclose screens of wood, very light and graceful. The north and south chancel arches were of the same character as the rest. The tower arch, opening into the church, was more deeply moulded than any. The roof beneath the belfry was of stone, finely groined, and in the angles were elaborate sculptured brackets of foliage and flowers. The old rood screen, filled with glass, did duty at the west door as a preventer of draught. Inside the north and south doors were benches—still remaining, but much mutilated; that at the north late Decorated, the oldest thing here probably; that at the south plainer, with a trefoiled head.

"The great east window, of six lights, transomed, with tracery in its head, was filled with modern coloured glass, not particularly good, which remark applies to all the other stained windows here. The east windows in the chancels, of five lights each, were of very late Perpendicular, if not of debased character. There were two. The windows also in each chancel. The central chancel extended some feet beyond the side ones, with windows on the south. The aisles had west windows, containing the best tracery in the church. Most of the tracery throughout the lower range of windows still remains in a more or less preserved condition.

"A unique feature of Croydon church was its splendid series of corbels or brackets, nearly a hundred in all, supporting the springings of the arches and roof timbers. They were nearly all grotesque, representing animals and human faces; one or two of the latter being, however, of rare beauty. No two of these corbels were alike. Two of them remained for four centuries, still unhealed and unfinished.

"Near to the step of the chancel stood an ancient brass eagle. There was a priest's door in its proper place, and a sacristy door also. The roofs were of lofty pitch, and all new; the chancel had a cradle roof, the aisles and side chancels flat ones: all were of timber. The organ was a celebrated one. The tower contained eight bells, cast in 1788, which played the tune 'Hanover' every six hours.

"The font was large and handsome, of the same date as the church, an octagon, with quatrefoiled facets containing roses and faces alternately.

"The monuments of the church were historical, and are now all utterly ruined. In the north chancel, called Heron's Chancel, was an enormous Elizabethan one of white stone to Nicholas Heron, 1568; over it hung a helmet; near to it was a plain altar tomb to Elias Davy, 1459, an early benefactor to Croydon. Here was a small bas-relief by Flaxman to Ann Bowling. The middle chancel contained a handsome Elizabethan monument, 1573, with two full coloured kneeling figures, bearing the following quaint poetical inscription:—

Here lyeth buried the corpse,
Of Master Henry Mill,
Citizen and grocer,
Of London's famous citie;
Alderman and sometime thrive,
A man of prudent skill;
Charitable unto the poor,
And always full of pittie;
Whose soul we hope doth rest in bliss,
Whose joye doth still abound;
Though bodie his full deep do lie
In earth heere underground.

Elizabeth Mill, his loving wyf,
Lyeth also buried heere,
Who sixteen children did him beare,
The blessing of the Lord:
Eight of them sonnes, and the other
8 [sic]
Were daughters. This is cleare,
A witness sure of mutual love
And signe of great accord,
Whose soule among the Patriarchs,
In faithful Abram's brest,
Though bodie hers be wrapt in clay,
We hope in joye doth reste.

Some beautifully-proportioned columns, with gilt caps, further ornamented this little monument.

"But the glory of Croydon church was in the monuments of three Archbishops of Canterbury, Grindal, Whitgift, and Sheldon. Grindal, too pious to please his Queen, who deprived him of his office for his favour to the Puritans, died in 1583, and was buried here. His tomb, in the main chancel, bore a life-sized recumbent effigy of the good prelate, a faithful likeness, doubtless, retaining up to last Saturday all its primitive colours. Around it were several emblematic figures in the Cinquo-Sexto style, some of them very graceful. In the south chancel was the monument of Whitgift, 1604, a copy of Grindal's, except the likeness. Near it was a finely-chiselled monument to Archbishop Sheldon, 1678, exhibiting, however, the great falling-off in ecclesiastical art since the beginning of the century. This was all in white and black marble. The Archbishop, life-sized, with his mitre on, reclined as certainly in life he never did, in a sarcophagus, on three sides of which was carved a whole Golgotha of skulls, bones, &c., splendidly done, and reminding one of Roubillac's works in Westminster Abbey. This has always been considered the monument of the church. Between

the monuments of Whitgift and Sheldon was the upright and magnificent tomb of Thomas Warham, dating from 1478. This was the finest thing here. A copy of it is in Beddington church, to one of the Carews; and one similar to it may be seen in the chancel of Lambeth church. Matrices of brass remained in it, and it always bore the deceased's helmet. A pleasing small monument to T. Murgatroyd, 1610; and a plain ancient tomb in the north aisle, under a flat arch, completed the important monuments. Other Archbishops, as Herring and Potter, were buried here, but without monuments. There was a brass, concealed from view, to S. Gabriel, priest, 1515. One or two matrices remained in the north chancel."

SANGER'S CIRCUS AND HIPPODROME.

THE Agricultural Hall has been once more converted into an arena for horsemanship, a purpose to which its spacious area is well adapted, and no better guarantee could be given of the excellence of the company engaged than the intimation of its identity with that of "Sanger's Circus," whose elaborately-coloured posters have for years so picturesquely emblazoned the dead walls of all the principal towns in the kingdom. The hall is gaily decorated with flags and banners suggestive of every nationality, is brilliantly lighted with innumerable gas-jets, and is so commodiously arranged for spectators that thousands of persons may simultaneously witness the rapid movements of the equestrians from one end of the building to the other without inconveniencing themselves or their neighbours. The ring is larger by fifteen yards than usual, and the entertainment furnished by Messrs. Sanger's troupe is exceedingly good of its kind. Airec, the equilibrium gymnast, as he is styled, performs some astonishing feats whilst ascending and descending a rope slung perpendicularly; the "great Polandric Sprite," displays some curious accomplishments significant of the great success with which he has cultivated the literally high art of "polandring;" and Eugene on the flying trapeze, particularly if he would dispense with some needlessly perilous exploits, will be found worthy of favourable comparison with the daring Leotard, who first associated his name with those singular aerial flights. The most difficult feats of equestrianism are gracefully executed by Miss Julia Burdet Sanger upon a bare-backed charger; Mdle. Keribel leaps forward and backward through the smallest-sized hoops, diminished at last to a "balloon" said to be only 12 in. in diameter; and Mdle. Rose Ethair and Mdle. Leopoldine Gaertner win the warmest of plaudits when they respectively introduce their performing and highly-trained horses Satan and Borgia to the admiring gaze of the multitude. The vaulting, which extends over nine horses and a pyramid of men placed upon them, is very striking; and the double somersaults of Messrs. Purvis and Elbin are thrown with remarkable dexterity. When the spectators have become sufficiently dizzy with the rapid gyrations of M. Nicole Pledge on the *corde elastique*, have adequately admired the sagacity of the performing elephant, and have enjoyed to their heart's content the whimsicalities of the clowns, Holloway and Elbin, as well as the gymnastic exploits of those boneless grotesques Les Frères de Castro, the hippodrome furnishes fresh sources of excitement. A fine stud of horses is of itself no small attraction to English eyes; but when these animals are seen rushing round the course, and variously engaged in handicap flat races, chariot-races, Roman races, and steeplechases, the appearance of the eager throng in the outer ring vividly recalls the aspect of Epsom on the Derby Day. The concluding gathering of all the forces on the establishment, brilliantly equipped and mustering under the banner which signifies this to be "The Congress of the Monarchs," is a most imposing pageant, bringing the equestrian entertainment to a highly effective climax. An excellent brass band, under the leadership of Mr. J. H. Emidy, enlivens the performances; and when the establishment, which includes twenty Bedouin Arabs and some zoological members of the company, is displayed in its full strength, there can be no complaint among the visitors to the Agricultural Hall of not having obtained an abundant shilling's worth.

Misfortune, however undesired, has already attended the performances here. On Boxing Night one of the ostlers fell under the feet of the horse he was leading in the grand procession, and was found to be dead when extricated. There was no means of accounting for the occurrence, except on the supposition that a sudden attack of concussion of the brain, from which it was found the poor fellow had suffered, had caused his fall, and that the injuries he then sustained accelerated his unhappy fate.

On the occasion when we ourselves visited the circus, what seemed to be two accidents occurred. There were "spills," both in the race called the "Islington Steeplechase" and in the race with coloured jockeys. If these events were premeditated and a regular part of the performance, we cannot help thinking they constitute a rather rough species of "horse-play."

"THE FROZEN MILLPOND."

In these times, when the ugly in art—especially as applied to book illustration—runs riot, when to produce a striking monstrosity is deemed a proof of genius, it is truly refreshing to meet with a drawing so true to nature as Mr. Willis's "Frozen Millpond," and which so vividly recalls the scenes, and pastimes, and performances of our youth. We—the present writer—were reared in the north, where few seasons passed which did not afford opportunities for curling-matches on the upper reaches of even the Tweed, the Clyde, the Forth, and the Tay; and where certainly every millpond furnished an arena for the sliding sport of schoolboys, if not for "the roaring play" of adults. Many a time and oft have we engaged in the "larks," and met with some of the mishaps, which occupy the young rogues in Mr. Willis's picture. We have "kept the pot aboilin'," "knocked at the cobbler's door," played "curcuddy," had many a fall, got even an occasional ducking, and, on going home at night with, may be, a cut lip, a contused eye, a broken head, or frozen garments, have been "warmed up" with a smart caning, by way of consolation and encouragement. If the ice was brittle, what sport it was to push timid fellows to the brink of the dangerous spots! What fun to trip up awkward performers on the slide! And then, the last thing at night, you know, how clever it was to cut a hole in the ice, so that the water might flow over the surface—as, according to the laws governing the contracting and expanding of liquids under the influence of cold, it was bound to flow—so that the night's frost might act upon it, and, by freezing above the old ice, greatly strengthen the ice for future operations! All this, after the lapse of more years than we care to mention, is brought vividly back to memory by Mr. Willis's drawing; and we have to thank him for the pleasure of becoming a boy again for a brief season. We doubt not that many of our readers will feel themselves under a similar obligation.

THE RITUALISTS.—We learn from a trustworthy source that two laymen belonging to the Ritualistic party have each provided £1000, which they have banked and intend to use in promoting unity against certain Low-Church clergymen, should any attack, as is threatened, be made upon St. Mary Magdalene's, Munster-square, or St. Alban's, Holborn. Evidence of several notorious breaches of the plain letter of the Rubric is said to have been obtained on the direct testimony of well qualified observers at the parish churches of St. Marylebone and St. Mary, Islington, the clergymen of which have joined in protesting against Ritualism.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

SALMON-POACHING ON THE WYE.—On the Wye there is a large and organised band of poachers known as "Rebecca and her daughters." Recently there was a collision between a large party of water bailiffs and gamekeepers and a gang of about twenty poachers, in which several men were injured. Four of the poachers were captured. This encounter and capture served to dispel a belief entertained by many that these salmon-poachers were poor, needy labourers, and has shown that "Rebecca and her daughters" are chiefly composed of the largest occupiers of land in the district; for two of the persons captured are the sons of one of the wealthiest farmers thereabouts, and it is now well known that the majority of the gang are men well to do. The four prisoners were brought up at Benybut Ferry Sessions on the 27th and 28th ult. The occasion drew together the whole population of the district for many miles round, and the greatest excitement prevailed. Mr. Evans, the magistrate, after giving the prisoners a lecture, discharged them. The Fishery Board have, however, resolved to lay the case before the Home Secretary.

MR. BRIGHT, MP., AND HIS CENSORS.

MR. H. D. SEYMOUR, M.P.

MR. DANBY SEYMOUR, M.P., has addressed the following letter to Mr. Bright in addition to that which appeared in our last week's Number:—

Athenium Club, Jan. 3.

My dear Bright,—I am sorry to be obliged to trouble you with another letter; but as it is your speeches, and not your brother's, which I have written about, and for which I am called to account, I prefer to communicate directly with you.

I never saw Mr. Morley's letters to your brother till I read them yesterday in the *Times*, and I was surprised to find that the explanations which I had sent to Mr. Morley near the beginning of the correspondence had, doubtless from an extreme press of business, never been communicated to Mr. Jacob Bright, but an erroneous impression was conveyed in Mr. Morley's second letter.

In the *Times* of Oct. 17, page 7, column 5 from the left, line 14, I find these words:—"But I deny altogether that the rich alone are qualified to legislate for the poor; and more than that, the poor alone would be qualified to legislate for the rich."

A man can hardly be called poor who has an independence, however small; the poor man, as I understand the term, is he who lives from hand to mouth who has been either unable or unwilling to save, and who has generally received an education far inferior to what I think he ought to have. Now, I repeat that if you put legislation entirely into the hands of these persons, as you are represented to have expressed a willingness to do, they would fall into the hands of designing men, or enthusiasts; measures would be proposed inimical to the properties of the classes, who would resist by force if necessary, and a civil war, such as we saw in France, would be the consequence. I think I am perfectly justified in drawing these conclusions, if you really said what has been attributed to you. Mr. Jacob Bright says you did not, and gives an entirely different version, in the spirit of which I cordially agree, and which I at once accept as correct. I conclude that the *Times* reporter mistook your words. I am glad that Mr. Jacob Bright has raised the question, as it has cleared up a point on which many others, like myself, may have had misconceptions, and about which I should be sorry that your real views should be misunderstood.

With regard to the other point to which Mr. Jacob Bright has alluded, I admit that he convicted me of an error, although a very small one. It was a mistake of a single word, for which I have never ceased apologising. "All" was printed, instead of "half;" but this did not in the least affect my argument. The statement that half the land of England is in the hands of 150 proprietors, I humbly submit, deserves the epithet I applied to it; and I respectfully beg to say that such statements appear to me blemishes in your matchless oratory, because the object of eloquence is to persuade, and men hesitate to believe if they cannot depend upon the facts on which the conclusions of the speaker are based. In some minds, also—though not in mine—it throws a doubt on the bona fides of the orator, because the greater portion of the audience cannot inquire for themselves, and accept whatever you tell them on your high authority. You are presumed to know this; and therefore, if you mislead them, you are naturally held responsible.

I have endeavoured now to justify myself where I think I was right, and frankly to apologise for my error where I was wrong. I think I have given an explanation which will appear satisfactory in the eyes of all just and fair men; and as for those who are not just and fair, I think it my duty to regard them with the indifference they deserve.—I remain, yours truly,

J. Bright, Esq.

HENRY D. SEYMOUR.

P.S.—As your brother has attacked me and sent his letter direct to the newspapers, without previously furnishing me with a copy, I am compelled to adopt the same line in my defence.

MR. RICHARD GARTH, Q.C., M.P.

The following correspondence has passed between Mr. Bright, M.P., and Mr. Richard Garth, the newly-elected member for Guildford:—

Rochdale, Dec. 24, 1866.

Sir,—Through the courtesy of an elector for Guildford I have received a handbill printed by Mr. Stent, printer, stationer, &c., Guildford, purporting to contain a report of a speech delivered by you to an "enthusiastic meeting of Mr. Garth's supporters, held at the White Hart Hotel, Friday evening, Dec. 14, 1866." I wish to call your attention to some passages in this speech. I pass by much which is open to criticism, and confine myself to certain exact statements to which you appear to have committed yourself.—1. You ask, "What has Mr. Bright done for his own people? Has he ever stood for his own place? Dare he ever stand for it? Not he! He has been booted away from his own premises; his own people distrust him." 2. You ask, "What did he do in the cotton famine? When thousands of men were out of employment, when people down here who had no direct interest in the matter subscribed so liberally—why, he did not subscribe a halfpenny." 3. You say, "I will tell you what he did. He wanted to give them a loan which was to be repaid in so many years, so that during those years he would have these people as his serfs at his beck and call to do what he pleased with, and to prevent their rising when he chose to put wages at whatever rate he liked." You state that I have not answered charges of a similar kind made against me, and you therefore assume that they are true. I cannot stoop to reply to the folly and the slander of every poor Tory partisan who assails me, and I should not have noticed you but for the fact that you are a member of the House of Commons. I am quite sure you will not venture to say on the floor of Parliament, where I could meet you, what you have had the courage to say at the White Hart in Guildford, and therefore I address this letter to you rather than wait till the opening of Parliament. With regard to the paragraph which I have marked No. 1, I beg to tell you that the only part of it which is not false is that which assumes or asserts that I have not stood as a candidate for the borough of Rochdale. I have not been a candidate for this borough, though on several occasions I have been asked to stand by the most eminent men of the Liberal party, which has a large majority in the borough. I believe there is not a respectable man in Rochdale, of your own party, who will not admit that if I had wished it, and had consented to leave the great constituency which has for nine years past honoured me with its confidence, I might, at this moment, have been the Parliamentary representative of this borough. The rest of the paragraph marked No. 1 is simply a falsehood in every part of it. Of the assertion in paragraph No. 2 I may say the same. It is a falsehood in every part of it. I am not in the habit of boasting of what I give, and I shall not now enter into particulars that I may confute you. I may say that, after we had subscribed as largely as any other firm in the town, my only complaint against the relief committee in this district was that it did not make further calls upon the millowners here before it applied for assistance from the general fund at the disposal of the committee in Manchester. I may say further that, according to my means, I believe I did not fall short of what was done by any other contributor to the fund, whether in or out of this county. Possibly you are not aware of the fact that the largest sum given by any contributor to the fund is but a trifle when compared with the losses suffered by nearly all the firms in the cotton trade during the disastrous years of the American war. In paragraph No. 3 you make a strange assertion both as to fact and motive. I am obliged to tell you that the whole paragraph is false from beginning to end. You must be singularly ignorant of the condition and temper of the working men of this district to imagine that any employer can have them "as his serfs at his beck and call, to do what he pleases with, and to prevent their rising when he chooses to put wages at whatever rate he likes." I have now called your attention to some statements of your speech. I say that these statements are false—wholly and absolutely false. If you knew them to be false when you made them, I need not write the word which would properly describe you. If you made them, not knowing whether they were true or false, I can only pity your disregard of all honourable feeling and caution when dealing with the character of your opponents. I do not expect you will deny the accuracy of the report of your speech, for I find that you repeated the substance of the slanders in your speech at the nomination for Guildford. I do not expect that you will attempt to prove the charges you have made, for that I know to be impossible. Whether you will retract what you have said, and express sorrow for having said it, will depend on whether, being a Queen's Counsel and a member of Parliament, you possess the qualities which are never found wanting in the character of a gentleman.

I am, respectfully, JOHN BRIGHT.

R. Garth, Esq., M.P., 3, Paper buildings, Temple.

Temple, Jan. 3.

Sir,—I have already explained to you my reasons for not replying earlier to your letter of the 24th of last month. I was anxious, in justice to you as well as to myself, to put you in possession, as far as I could, of the sources of information upon which the statements I made at Guildford, and of which you complain, were founded. I have no personal knowledge either of yourself or of Rochdale, and my impressions have been derived partly from your own speeches and partly from correspondence and other statements which have appeared from time to time in the public prints. I have not yet been able to lay my hand upon some of these; but I would call your attention to two speeches which I had recently read, and which, no doubt, were fresh in my memory at the time when I addressed my friends at Guildford. The first of these is a speech of Mr. Pope Hennessy, addressed to the electors of the county of Wexford, and reported in the *Times* of Nov. 6 last, from which the following is an extract:—"He is a great manufacturer, and he employs what he calls a good many hands; . . . he employs a large number of human beings—men, women, and children. Now, no man stands up so stoutly for his own strong class as against the weak instruments they employ as Mr. Bright; he was a leader in the defence of the cruel old system of slavery, of debt-enslaving, of ignorance, of shortened, unhappy lives which the Factory Acts have successfully attacked. Hardly two years have passed since, at a meeting of the magnates of Manchester, he boasted of his former opposition to the Factory Act, and said he should be prepared to do the same again. He kept his word; for when the Lacc Factories Bill was before the House, and

the Bleachworks Bill, and a bill to give some protection to the poor girls who work in the Bradford warehouses, he was not only present, but violent in his opposition to those salutary and benevolent acts. He fought, and the other Radical manufacturers with him, for what he deemed to be a sort of property of his—the right of doing what he liked with his own workpeople. He carried his class feelings even below the surface of the earth, and when the Mines Regulation Bill was before Parliament he and his class would not give the smallest help to the miner to get better ventilation or greater safety from accidents, simply because better ventilation and greater safety mean additional expense to the mineowner. . . . In 1861 a deputation from the miners came to London, and presented me with an address of thanks for some little services I tried to render them, and from those men I heard a unanimous condemnation of Mr. Bright. The other speech to which I allude (and of which printed copies have, I believe, been widely circulated) was delivered by Mr. Ferrand to the Working Men's Conservative Association at Bradford, on the 20th of November last. In this speech Mr. Ferrand says:—"I have watched Mr. Bright for years, and although, as I have told you, he is possessed of marvellous powers of eloquence, a greater political coward never entered the House of Commons. . . . I never heard him make a speech which inculcated peace and good-will among men; but, on the contrary, he has always tried to set the different classes of the community against each other, and thereby to encourage bloodshed. For twenty-five years I have worked with you, working men of Bradford, in obtaining many great and conciliating measures from Parliament, while he has opposed them all. During that time I never heard him speak a word in favour of working men in the House of Commons. You have been reminded of what his conduct was in Lancashire during the cotton famine. He took no part, either in purse or person, to relieve the distress in his native county; but when I met, at Manchester, a great assembly of delegates from the cotton districts of Cheshire, Lancashire, Staffordshire, and Yorkshire, they unanimously declared that England had no more bitter enemy than Mr. Bright, and that he was detested by all the working men in Lancashire." I can hardly suppose that your attention, as a public man, has not been directed to these passages; and I am not aware that they have ever been contradicted. I had seen other public statements, and I had heard reports evincing your unpopularity among the working classes at Rochdale and in Lancashire generally; and I certainly did believe that you were unpopular there. You admit that you never stood for Rochdale, although you have been invited to do so by your friends; and it was, therefore, surely not unreasonable that I should form an opinion, which I believe I share in common with many others, that, if you had stood for Rochdale, you would not have been successful. My views in this respect may have been erroneous; but I consider that I had a perfect right to entertain those views and to express them. I also most firmly believed, from statements and reports which I had seen and heard, that you had been hooted from your own premises and were distrusted by your workpeople; but, as you tell me that what I said in this respect was wholly without foundation, I of course take it for granted that I was misinformed; and I beg not only to retract my statement, but to express my sincere regret for having made it. With regard to the other paragraphs of which you complain, I must observe that the report of my speech is in some respects inaccurate. I disclaim having ever said or intended to say, "that you had not subscribed a halfpenny" in aid of the distress which prevailed during the cotton famine. I sincerely hope and trust that there was no manufacturer in any of the cotton districts against whom such a charge could justly be made. But I believe that I am quite correct in supposing that at Rochdale, in the month of January, 1862, you did propose or suggest that, instead of raising further subscriptions, the poor-law guardians, or the millowners, or both, should lend sums of money to the distressed operatives, upon the understanding that such loans should be repaid out of their earnings as soon as they should be restored to work. It was this proposition of yours to which I alluded, and upon which I animadverted in my speech at Guildford; and I certainly was of opinion then, and I am so still, that the effect of such a scheme as you proposed would have been to entail a very heavy load of obligation upon the working men, which would have placed them, possibly for years, in great measure under the control of their employers, who might have exercised that control either in regulating the amount of wages or in other ways; and I was, and am still, further of opinion that to have carried out your proposition at such a time and under such circumstances would have been by no means a liberal or generous policy towards the distressed operatives. It is almost unnecessary to add that you are quite at liberty to make any use you please of this letter. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

John Bright, Esq. RICHARD GARTH.

Rochdale, Jan. 6, 1867.

Sir,—Your letter of yesterday has just arrived, and I find it almost precisely what I expected. After a week's search, you have not found a single fact to establish the gross charges brought against me in your speech at Guildford. Instead of facts and proofs, you fill three pages of your letter with extracts from speeches of Mr. Ferrand and Mr. Hennessey, which speeches have doubtless been spoken, but which I have never read. I will give you an anecdote of Mr. Ferrand. About twenty years ago he was in the House of Commons, and on one occasion he made a ferocious and vulgar attack on my lamented friend Mr. Cobden. At the conclusion of his speech Mr. Byng, then member for Middlesex, one of the most respectable members of the House, came up to Mr. Cobden, and said to him, "Don't trouble yourself about him. I have been in the House for fifty years, and no such ruffian has been before in my time." You will not be surprised, therefore, that I do not trouble myself with what Mr. Ferrand may say. But in what Mr. Ferrand and Mr. Hennessey have said I find no proof of the truth of what you have said. You made three charges of the most distinct character—that I had been hooted from my own premises—that I have not given "a halfpenny" to the relief of the distress in these districts—and that I wished to support the suffering workmen by loans, that I might have them at my "beck and call," "to do what I pleased with," and to prevent their rising when I chose "to put wages at whatever rate I liked." Your authority for the first charge is evidence at such that you dare not produce it; it is not even equal to the authority of Mr. Ferrand and Mr. Hennessey, and, therefore, you retract it. The second charge you escape from by denying the accuracy of the report, without saying what you actually did say in place of what you are reported to have said. With regard to the third charge, you seek to avoid it by expressing an opinion that if money were lent to families in distress it would be burdensome to repay it, which nobody doubts; but you express no regret that you charged me with recommending a system of loans in order that I might use them as a means of oppressing the workmen during the period that would be required for the repayment of the loans. My object in suggesting loans was to give relief in such a manner, to a large number of persons, as would not bring them into the list of ordinary paupers and would not wound their honourable pride; and if the distress had lasted only a few months, as was then hoped would be the case, the plan would have been practicable, and might have been adopted with great advantage. On a review of your speech and your letter, I come to this conclusion—that you wished to get into Parliament and were not particular as to the path which might lead to it. You threw dirt during your canvass, doubtless knowing that, if needful, you could eat it afterwards. There are many men who go "through dirt to dignities," and I suspect you have no objection to be one of them.

I am, with whatever respect is due to you, yours, &c.,
Richard Garth, Esq., M.P., Temple, London. JOHN BRIGHT.

Temple, Jan. 5.

Sir,—In acknowledging your letter of the 4th inst., I only think it necessary to observe that the conclusion to which you say you have arrived, and which you are pleased to express in such elegant phrase, is to me a matter of the most perfect indifference. Whether your opinion of me is correct or not, I shall leave to those who know me better to determine. I am quite aware that I am not your match in the use of discourteous and insulting language; and therefore, instead of concluding my letter in the screeching form which you have thought proper to adopt, I beg to subscribe myself, with conventional courtesy, Your obedient servant,

John Bright, Esq., M.P. RICHARD GARTH.

LITERARY ACTIVITY OF THE YEAR.—During the past year there have appeared 4294 new books and new editions:—Religious books and pamphlets, 849; biographical and historical, 194; medical and surgical, 169; poetry and the drama, 232; novels, 390; minor fiction and children's books, 544; travels, topography, and geography, 195; annuals and serials (volumes only), 228; agriculture, horticulture, &c., 64; English philology and education, 196; European and classical philology and translation, 161; law, 81; naval, military, and engineering, 39; science, natural history, &c., 147; trade and commerce, 79; politics and questions of the day, 167; illustrated works, 85; art, architecture, &c., 34; miscellaneous, not classified, 359; total, 4294. (The Bookseller.)

RITUALISM AT ST. ALBAN'S, HOLBORN.—The Rev. A. H. Mackonochie, incumbent of St. Alban's, Holborn, who seems to be the representative man of the Ritualists, has issued an address to his congregation, which sets forth very clearly what Ritualism means. The Lower House of Convocation and the Bishop of London, he says, have objected to the service at St. Alban's; and, in accordance with their wish, he is to discontinue the "elevation of the blessed sacrament," and no longer to use incense at the beginning of the service, at the gospel, and at the offertory. So far he submits, "under protest," but he distinctly contends that the practices are legal. Nor does he leave us in any doubt as to what are his ideas of the eucharist. The most fervent Roman Catholic could hardly express more emphatically a belief in the real presence. Mr. Mackonochie holds that in the holy communion the body and blood of Christ are present "really and essentially," and that the presence is "the Presence of God the Word Incarnate." There can be no doubt, then, as to Mr. Mackonochie's own creed. We have reason to believe that two legal gentlemen went to St. Alban's on Sunday week by one of the highest ecclesiastical authorities to note down the doctrine taught by the Incumbent as the preliminary to active proceedings; and his manifesto will at once explain and justify that step.

FINE ARTS.

THE EXHIBITION OF SKETCHES BY THE SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER COLOURS.

THE Old Society has disappointed us more than once of late. The reason of the disappointment is obvious enough: a glance at the catalogue of sketches and studies will explain it. Names which have but small claim to a place in the roll of members are followed by such portentous rows of figures that we can hardly be surprised to find that we have to go over many superficial feet of "sketching" which can claim to be little better than paper-staining, before we come to "the genuine article."

It is much to be regretted that Messrs. Gastineau and Collingwood Smith, with some others, whose names we have neither time nor inclination to set down, have not followed the example of Mr. Burne Jones. That gentleman, we rejoice to see—for it proves that he possesses qualities which may lead him to correct faults that now overlie virtues—has the good sense to withhold the crudities with which he last year inundated the gallery. He has been severely handled—very severely handled—by the critics, and not always reasonably. We trust that the severity of the lesson will be promptly beneficial; and that this year he will lay aside affectation and assume sound drawing; avoid extravagance and cultivate nature. He will then be in a position to turn the tables on those who have censured him, and prove that he is what his friends believe him to be—an artist of originality and power.

We fear, however, that the comment we have made on Mr. Jones's absence will not apply to the gentlemen whom we exhorted to follow the example of his abstinence. If they were to lie by for a time we cannot but fear that they would lose the only merit they now possess: the fruitful facility that covers the walls of the Old Society with hasty sketches, which are false in colour, deficient in mind, and utterly unintelligible in purpose.

We note with regret Mr. Carl Haag's absence this winter, an absence which we fear must be due to ill-health or domestic affliction, for he is so true an artist that under no other circumstances could he possibly be found without any sketches for exhibition.

The members of the Society in their race for fame do not, by any means, present the exciting spectacle which most delights the votary of St. Derby. You could not "cover them with a hat." A small and select party make the running, and more than a few are hopelessly distanced in the contest. Art, like Time in Rosalind's catalogue of paces, walks with some, ambles with others, trots with a certain number, and gallops with a fourth division.

Among those who uphold the honour of the society with the greatest success, Mr. Walker stands foremost. In his painting there is less of the uncertainty which of late has been observable in his book illustration. He contributes but four small sketches to the winter exhibition, but each of them is a gem. There is possibly a trifle of affectation observable in No. 352, if we must be sternly critical, but No. 413 is simply delightful. "The Street, Cookham" (360) is a marvellous realisation. About No. 385 we are not so enthusiastic. Mr. Shields runs Mr. Walker hardest, and since he first exhibited he has considerably decreased the distance between them. He, like Mr. Walker and the wiser members, prefers to give a few conscientious works, rather than crowd the walls with slight and haphazard notes. We must admit that Messrs. Walker and Shields do not give us for the exhibition of "sketches and studies" pictures that exactly come under those definitions; but, on the other hand, the gentlemen who answer exactly to the requirements of the display in the winter, send to the summer collection, of presumably finished works, things which could only pass muster as sketches. Mr. Shields in his "No, you shan't go, Uncle!" (96) realises the actions and proportions of children with a truth that has seldom been equalled. "Gipsy Esther" (317) is another bit of realism which should be compared with the stage "gipsies" usually offered us by artists.

Mr. J. D. Watson exhibits some of his studies for "The Pilgrim's Progress" (82), one of the finest examples of character-illustration we have had for some centuries. "A Blacksmith's Shop" (356) and "A Kitchen, Cookham" (393) prove that he has not forgotten, in his study of figure-drawing, the by no means minor importance of scenery and detail.

One of the finest "notes of colour" in the gallery—a veritable sketch, stamped with the evidence of genius—is a little picture of "Backs of Houses in Soho" (70), by Mr. Boyce, who exhibits a largeish number of studies, every one of which is admirable.

Mr. Lundgren appears to be meditating a series of pictures to illustrate the history of the arts. "Dante and Giotto" (123) and "Michael Angelo and Lorenzo de Medici" (180) are spoken of as "studies for fresco" in the catalogue. It is too much to hope that frescoes of such great merit are commissioned by Government.

Mr. Naftel is a painter of such rare talent that we feel sure he needs but to have his attention drawn to a fault and it will be instantly corrected. In the sketches exhibited this winter he shows unmistakably too strong a leaning to the use of a purple tone in his landscapes. It is, rather, a "magenta" hue—a colour rarely discernible in nature. We know how subtly the eye of an artist can anatomise the pleasure derivable from colour, and we incline to believe that the knowledge of how much of the loveliness of distances is due to the large admixture of purple with the undertones has led Mr. Naftel to use it with too free a hand.

Mr. Hunt is represented by some remarkable studies of peculiar effects. "Framwellgate Bridge" (32) and "Elvet Bridge" (41)—more especially the latter—are most masterly. Mr. Lamont does not seem to improve. "The Wandering Minstrel" (130) is lacking in vigour both of colour and of composing; and "In the Patio" (153) seems feeble. The smaller sketches on the screens, "The Tricolor" (355) and "Between Lights" (361), do far more justice to his powers. Mr. Smallfield shows to the best advantage in his little snatch of landscape—a mere study possibly for background, but it seems to indicate a new field for his genius. "Chalk Roads in Sussex" (176) can hardly be surpassed for truth and realism even by some of Mr. Boyce's best works; and that is very high praise indeed.

Mr. Samuel Jackson is very welcome! His sketches remind us of his earlier works, before mannerism and niggles—with, we fear, their too frequent companions, indolence and neglect of nature—had reduced one of our most promising water-colourists to a level with the prolific studio-naturalists whose manufactures make landscape stale, flat, and unprofitable.

Messrs. Rosenberg and Newton maintain the high position they have so well earned in the society. Mr. Holland, Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Branwhite, Mr. Davidson, and Mr. S. Read—a noble array of known names—all do work worthy of their reputation. Of artists with such established fame as Messrs. Gilbert, Brittan Willis, Dodgson, Duncan, and Birket Foster, we need say no more than that they contribute their share to the collection, and do their best to counteract the monotony which the superabundant energy of other members induces.

ANOTHER FATAL COLLIERY ACCIDENT.—On Friday week an accident occurred at the Courthouse pit, Kingswinford, about three miles from the town of Stourbridge, and the property of Mr. Benjamin Gibbons. It appears from inquiries made upon the spot that during the whole of Thursday night the engine was engaged in pumping the water out of the "sump," or well, at the bottom of the shaft, in which the water from the working is collected. While the work of the pit is going on the "sump" is covered with strong planks. It was the duty of James Brooks and Thomas Marsh to take the planks down to cover the "sump" in the pit in question, and about a quarter to six they proceeded to do so. They stepped on the cage, and the bankman gave the word to the engine-tender to lower the two men. The engine had made but one revolution when a jerk was heard, followed immediately by the dreadful sound of the cage, planks, and men crashing down the shaft. The jerk that was heard proved to be the parting of the hook by which the cage was attached to the pit chain. The depth of the pit is 160 yards; and, as may readily be believed, the bodies of the unfortunate men were found in a fearfully mangled condition. It is no exaggeration to say that they were literally dashed to pieces; the fragments had to be collected in bags. Brooks's skull was fractured, one of his feet hung only by a piece of skin, his legs were broken, and the viscera of the abdomen were found in the "sump." Both men have left wives and families; but the family of Brooks, who was fifty-two years of age, are mostly grown up. Marsh was only twenty-seven, and his three children are all young.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF THE METROPOLIS

ON Tuesday the Right Hon. S. H. Walpole received a deputation from the Metropolitan Municipal Association for promoting the better local government of the metropolis. Among those constituting the deputation, which was unusually large, were Lord Ebury, president of the association; the Hon. A. Kinnaid, M.P.; Mr. Thomas Hughes, M.P.; Mr. C. Buxton, M.P.; Mr. D. J. Rearden, M.P.; Sir John Lubbock, the Hon. F. Byng, Dr. Farr, Mr. James Beal, Mr. Peter Graham; Mr. George Godwin, F.R.S.; and Mr. J. C. Buckmaster, hon. secretary.

Lord Ebury, in introducing the deputation, said that it was composed of men of every shade of political opinion, and comprised gentlemen from every district of London. They had resolved themselves into an association for the purpose of concentrating their strength with a view to obtain some improvement in the government of the metropolis. His Lordship then gave a sketch of the history of metropolitan legislation during the last twenty years, and said that, when Lord Llanover introduced the Metropolitan Local Bill, it was found that there were then one hundred Acts of Parliament in existence which bore on the sanitary arrangements of London. The Metropolitan Local Bill passed into law; and the present board, formed under it, had shown the advantages of the concentration of power. The Act of which he was speaking was never intended to be a final measure, and it was now found that there were several evils existing and urgently demanding reform. These impeded the good government of London, which was inferior to many provincial towns, and certainly far inferior to the city of Paris, in its agencies of local administration. The numerous deputation he had the honour to introduce was a strong demonstration of the conviction of men of all modes of political opinion regarding the question of our municipal government.

Mr. Buckmaster, hon. secretary, said that a large number of gentlemen, members of vestries, and others, considering that the present government of London was in a disgraceful condition, had projected the Municipal Association, and a bill had been drawn up and adopted providing for the necessary reforms. It was intended to abolish a number of small local jurisdictions and to establish ten municipalities, seven north and three south of the Thames, all having as nearly as possible the same population. They would have greater power than the administrative bodies at present existing, and, from the extent of the districts over which they had authority, there would be less expense in their administrative action. The conflicting interests of about one hundred different committees would be reconciled and the requirements of the public fulfilled with greater care and promptitude than now. At present there were in the metropolis about forty vestries and 4000 persons engaged in our local government, and it was proposed to reduce that number to 400 aldermen and councillors under the projected plan. Delay was of all things to be avoided. The principle upon which the association sought the support of Government had been admitted over and over again by Committees of the House of Commons. He might add that there was to be no interference with the boundaries of parishes. Delay would necessitate the existence of the association for several years, and that should be avoided, as it had been established for prompt and speedy action.

In answer to Mr. Walpole, who asked what were to be the powers of the ten municipalities of which the establishment was contemplated by the bill, and also whether they were to have jurisdiction over the Metropolitan Board.

Mr. James Beal said that the powers of the municipalities were to be those conferred by the Municipal Reform Act.

Mr. Walpole inquired if the power of appointing judges and police and managing their own gao was considered in the scheme.

Mr. Beal said he could not see how these could be made exceptions. Vestries were no longer to have any power except for ecclesiastical purposes. The jurisdiction of magistrates and of police was to be continuous. The present bill was to be supplemented by another for establishing a central controlling body. In 1854 Sir George Lewis had recommended that several municipalities should be created; committees of the House of Commons had approved the plan in 1861 and 1866, so that there was nothing novel in the suggestions of the association. Inquiry had gone far enough, and it now remained to found public legislation on the evidence which had been collected. In reply to further questions from Mr. Walpole, regarding the manner in which the City should be treated under the project, Mr. Beal said that it was contemplated to take away county powers from the City, and that it would be under the jurisdiction of the central body proposed to be established hereafter. This central council would have control over the main drainage, the management of bridges, gaois, lunatic asylums, and also extensive powers of improvement. Under the scheme the metropolis would be made a county, and questions relating to gas and water would be considered by the central body. A great many of the existing evils arose from the utter helplessness of the citizens to cope with the powerful joint-stock companies. The question of our gas supply had been brought before the public; but if they had been in Liverpool or Manchester they could remedy the complained-of shortcomings themselves. Another consideration worthy of attention was that under the new system a better and more intelligent class of men would be induced to become active agents in sanitary reform, on account of the more dignified character given to our municipal institutions.

Mr. Godwin, F.R.S., said that our local government was disgraceful to our civilisation. To take one instance: the present state of Bethnal-green was a blot on our system of legislation. Medical officers elected by members of vestries were afraid to speak the truth, and had to do good by stealth. Estimating it at no extravagant rate, the deplorable manner in which our thoroughfares were managed cost the metropolis about £500,000 a year. Many who were well acquainted with the working of provincial municipalities had often spoken of the lamentable condition of the local administration of London.

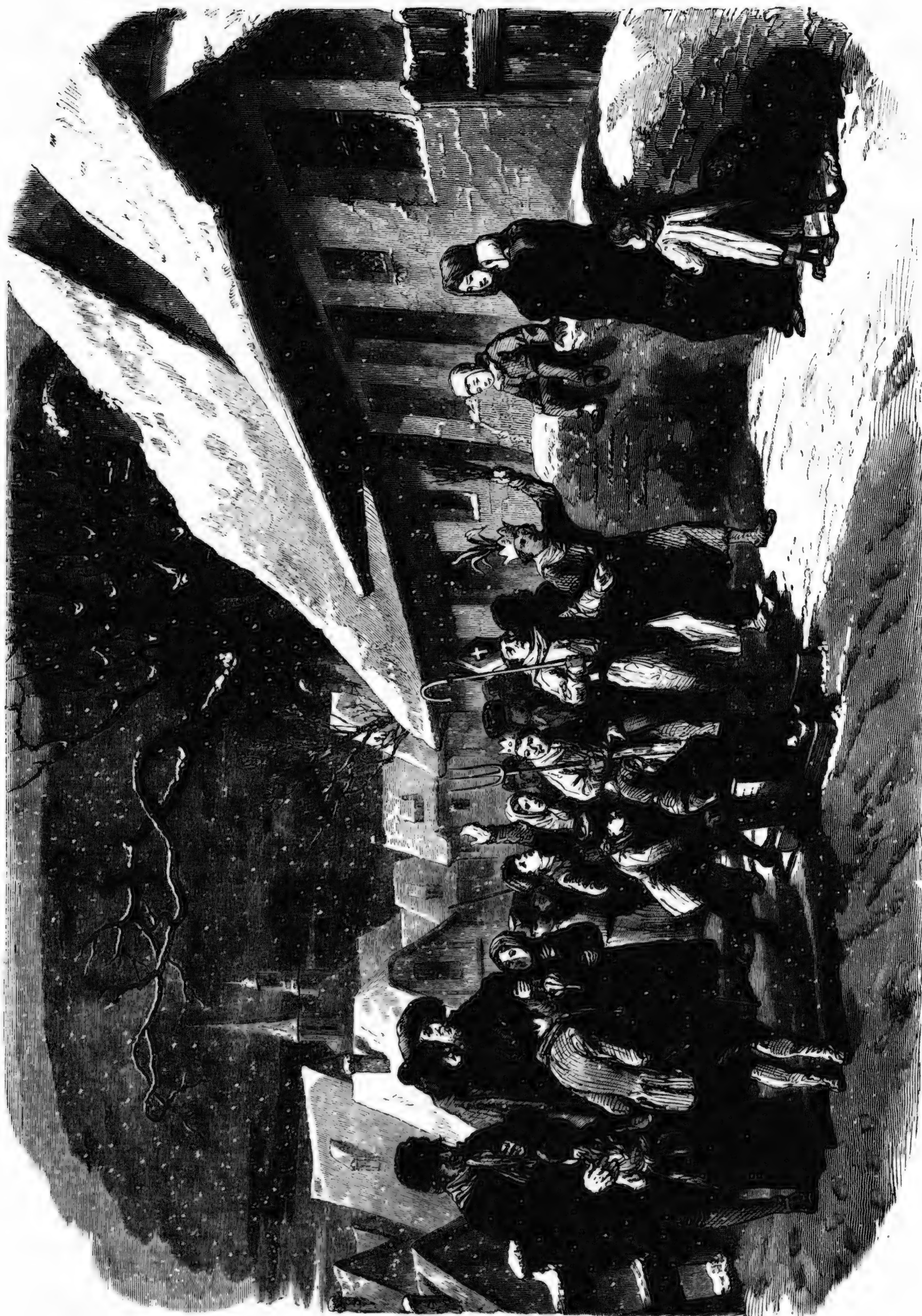
Mr. T. Hughes, M.P., Mr. Rearden, M.P., the Hon. F. Byng, Mr. Beggs, and others took part in a conversation which followed, in which, among other things, it was stated that every gas lamp in London costs the inhabitants five guineas, while in Manchester they are supplied at a rate of 25s. apiece.

Mr. Walpole said he agreed with the statement that the local government of the metropolis could be improved. He hoped, however, that the deputation would not demand any definite pledge from himself, but he promised that he would take care to bring the question before his colleagues, and that it would have his own most careful consideration.

Mr. Hughes, M.P., on the part of the members of the Metropolitan Municipal Association, thanked the Home Secretary for his courtesy, and the deputation then withdrew, the interview having lasted more than an hour.

A RACY GENERAL ORDER.—A correspondent of an Indian paper states that the following order was recently issued by an officer in command of a large military station:—"At a funeral party this morning the 'men' of the firing-party were in white clothing and the officer in cloth. If it was, therefore, not too cold for the former to be dressed as they were, there was no reason why the officer should, as he did, take upon himself to appear differently. But this was not the worst. The men of the party marched to the hospital like 'soldiers'; the officer, like a 'lazy native,' suffered himself to be carried in a palkee behind his men. He got out at the hospital gate, and went with the rest of the party to the grave 'on foot,' but with the inevitable palkee following close behind him, no doubt for the purpose of bringing him back, as he was seen re-entering in the same unsoldier-like manner in which he had left it, his men on this occasion marching behind him. The Brigadier-General commanding does not wish to inquire for the name of this officer; and he is glad he did not see him near enough to distinguish who he was, or he should publish it in this order. He desires, however, to inform him that this slovenly, discreditable manner of doing his duty will not be tolerated. If a 'young man' cannot, on a 'cool,' almost bracing morning, or under any circumstances when the men have to do it, manage to walk a couple of miles or thereabouts, he has mistaken his profession, and had better put himself under the charge of an 'ayah.'"

DEATH OF A CENTENARIAN PAUPER.—On New-Year's Day—her own birthday—there died in Shrewsbury workhouse Mary Galligal, aged 102 years. Mrs. Galligal, who was better known as "Granny," was, up to the very hour of our death, a singularly shrewd and lively old lady; and, propped up in her comfortable bed, held her regular receptions, and was wont to crack jokes and bandy repartees with her visitors, in which encounters she did not always come off second best. Although her body was sadly wasted away, her animal spirits never seemed to flag and her senses and intellect were in a remarkable state of preservation. By the kindness of Dr. Keate, the house surgeon, she had many privileges not usually accorded to paupers, among which were her lunch, her glass of gin, and her pipe, which were duly provided at eleven o'clock each morning. On New-Year's Day she finished her gin and smoked her pipe as usual, and then quietly lay back and died, without a struggle or sign of pain. Born on New-Year's Day, 1765, when George III. had been dead only five years, "Granny" was the humble, but, with one possible exception, the uniformly loyal subject of four consecutive Sovereigns. On her first birthday Fox was studying at Oxford, Pitt and Robert Burns were little boys in petticoats, and Nelson, one year older, had not yet left Barnham Thorpe rectory for his first school. When she was seven years of age America was an English colony, Warren Hastings was not yet made Governor-General of Bengal, and Louis XV. was on the throne of France. She was four years of age when Wellington and Napoleon were born; fifteen when Wordsworth was born; sixteen when Sir Walter Scott was born; twenty-three when Lord Byron was born; and twenty-five when Macaulay was born. Of these facts "Granny" was not altogether ignorant; but her strong point in historical reminiscence was in regard to the Irish Rebellion of '98, in the midst of which she, then in the prime of life, dwelt; and it is from her conversation on this theme that the hint given above of her exceptional disloyalty is gathered. It may be added that no doubt can exist as to "Granny's" precise age, the parish authorities having sought out the register of her birth, and being thus enabled to verify it.



THE FÊTE OF THE THREE KINGS, A GERMAN CUSTOM ON TWELFTH DAY.

TWELFTH DAY IN A GERMAN VILLAGE.

OUR Illustration represents a Twelfth-Day ceremony in one of those German villages in the vicinity of the Hartz, where "feasts and festivals" are commemorated as duly as in the larger towns. Humble as the scene was, it was full enough of picturesque quaintness to attract the regard of the artist; and it is sufficiently remarkable as showing how this festival of the Three Kings, which we call Twelfth Day, is observed with but little difference in places far removed from each other, and with little else in common either with respect to popular tastes or national customs. The Epiphany, or Day of Manifestation, was first established as a holiday in 813, the early Christians celebrating the feast of the nativity for twelve days, the latter of which was the anniversary of the appearance of the star which conducted Melchior, Jasper, and Balthazar, the three magi, or wise men, commonly called in Germany the three Kings of Cologne, out of the East to worship the Messiah and to offer gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Of these, Melchior offered the gold, Jasper the frankincense, and Balthazar the myrrh. These three gifts were, even in this country, offered on the altar by the monarch, either personally or through the Royal Chamberlain on the day of the lesser Epiphany, and the same practice was observed by the Kings of Spain.

In the Middle Ages the worship by the three Kings was celebrated by a little drama, called "The Feast of the Star." Three priests clothed as Kings, with their servants carrying offerings, met, from different directions, before the altar. The middle one, who came from the East, pointed with his staff to a star. A dialogue then ensued, and, after kissing each other, they began to sing, "Let us go and inquire;" after which the precentor began a response, "Let the Magi come." A procession then commenced, and, as soon as it began to enter the nave of the church, a crown with a star resembling a cross was lighted up and pointed out to the Magi, with "Behold the Star in the East!" This being concluded, two priests, standing at each side of the altar, answered, "We are those whom you seek," and, drawing a curtain, showed them a child, whom, falling down, they worshiped. Then the servants made the offerings of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, which were divided amongst the priests. The Magi meanwhile continued praying till they dropped asleep, when a boy clothed in an alb, "like an angel," addressed them with "All things which the prophets said are fulfilled." The festival then concluded with chanting of services.

It is an ancient Christian custom, and was probably suggested by a Pagan practice, to choose a king of the festival by beans. Sometimes a large cake was made, with a bean in it; and whoever got the slice containing the bean was king. The importance of this ceremony in France, where the mock sovereign is called "Roi de la Fève," is indicated by the proverbial phrase for good luck, "Il a trouvé la fève au gâteau"—"He has found the bean in the cake." On Twelfth Night, 1563, Mary Queen of Scots celebrated the

French pastime at Holyrood, but with a queen instead of a king. The lot fell to Mary Fleming, one of the maids of honour; and the real Queen dressed her in her own Royal robes and jewels.

Twelfth Day, or the Feast of the Three Kings, was once kept as a great holiday in this country; and as late as the reign of George III. the King, preceded by heralds, pursuivants, and the Knights of the Garter, Thistle, and Bath, in the collars of their respective orders, went to the Chapel Royal at St. James's, there to offer gold, frankincense, and myrrh, according to the ancient custom. After the illness of George III. the procession was discontinued, two gentlemen from the Chamberlain's office appearing instead, at-

like a neat map, he will see in the proper season the fruit and white flower blooming at once in the apple-orchards; the divisions covering the arable land like a green network up to the edge of oak forests or plantations of elm, or alternating with the vineyards, which are cultivated with a care which shows that wine is a luxury where the national drink is cider.

In the cottages of these districts, with their wide chimneys and tiled floors of the living-room reminding one somewhat of the old farms about St. Pierre, in Guernsey, the traveller may see some strange old customs and hear quaint old legends; but, though the place may be barely furnished, and few of the luxuries (though

tended by a box ornamented at the top by a spangled star, from which they took the offerings and placed them on an alms-dish held forth by the officiating priest.

We have sketched these ancient observances as being illustrative of the universal estimation in which the Feast of the Three Kings has been held, and as affording some reference to the simple custom by which the German peasant boys in remote villages celebrate the same anniversary in a ruder and more primitive fashion.

A COTTAGE IN THE NORTH OF FRANCE.

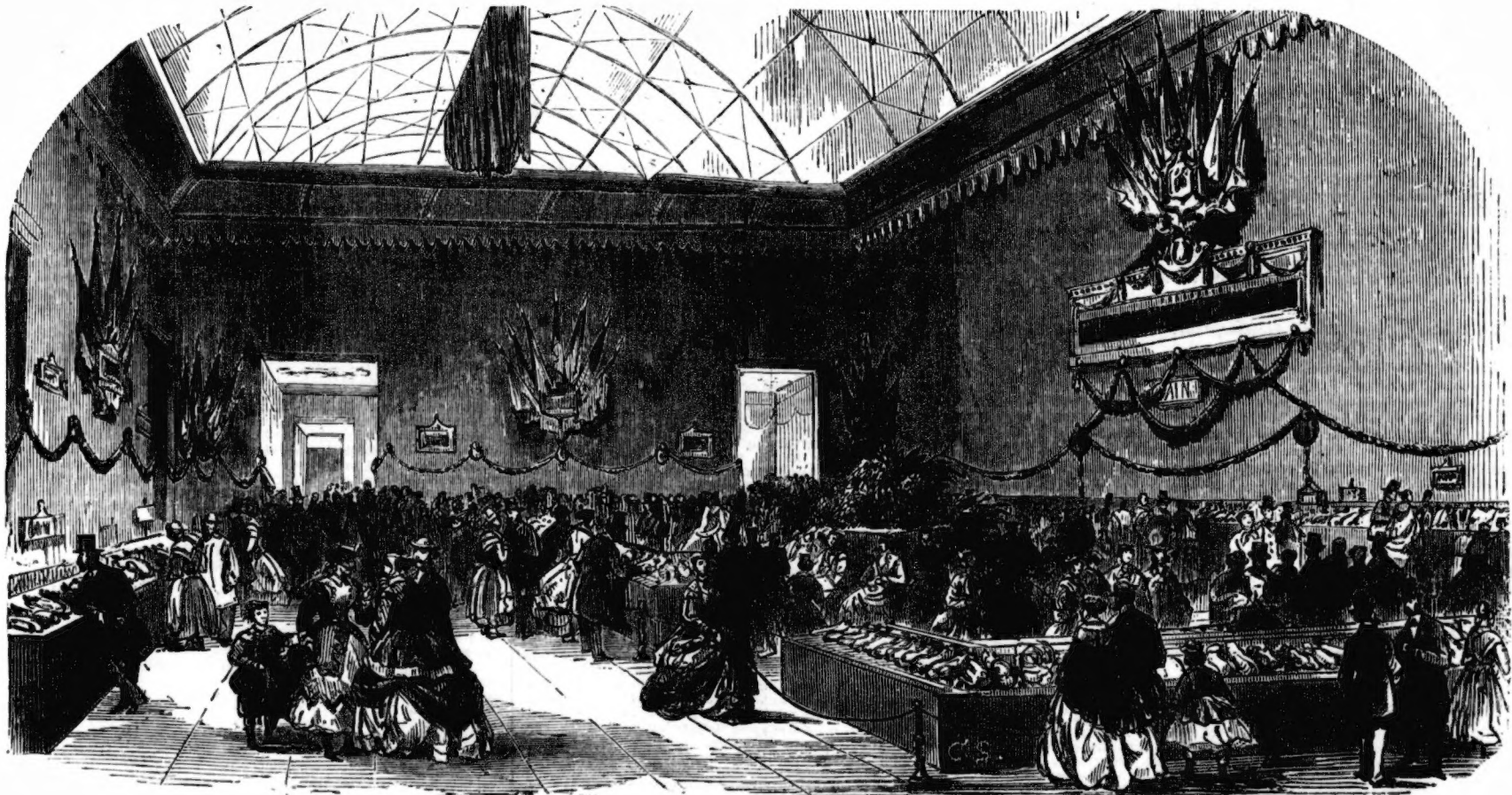
OUR Engraving, which is taken from an artist's sketch-book, represents one of those quaint "interiors" which are to be found only in remote districts and in places to which modern innovations have not yet reached. Of all civilised places in the world, these conditions hold good most certainly in the northern departments of France and in the more distant districts of the south. It is in the north, however, that, along with some of the education and intelligence of our more enterprising time, is to be found that adherence to old customs and primitive habits which is recognised as a kind of pious duty; and even the very dresses and household furniture of the northern people are preserved in accordance with the almost unchanged fashions that have obtained amongst them for generations.

In one particular, however, the people in Northern France have advanced to more modern notions. The dwellings are frequently roofed and the weather side of the houses is encased with slate, so that red tiles are disappearing altogether, to the great loss of colour and picturesque effect, though doubtless to increase of comfort. The dull tint, however, is relieved by the orange-coloured plaster of which the walls are built—or, rather, with which the mud or stone walls are covered and cemented. This is formed by mixing the peculiar salmon-tinted earth with lime, a combination which produces a remarkably warm tint, covering the central wattle framework and clay materials, which last a long time and have the advantage of being quickly raised into a building.

It is to the remoter portions of Normandy, however, far beyond Caen, that the traveller must go if he would see the primitive people. There, amidst the small *parcellements* of land, each divided from the other by regular hedges, so that the whole country looks



THE READING-LESSON: SCENE IN A COTTAGE IN THE NORTH OF FRANCE.



EXHIBITION OF POULTRY AND DAIRY PRODUCE IN THE PALACE OF INDUSTRY, PARIS.

mostly a supply of the necessities) of life may be there, he will generally find that the reading-lesson is not altogether neglected.

Above the hum and clack of the spinning-wheel may be heard the droning of the pupil reciting, perhaps, his lesson for the next day's school, in the interval of such light work as he does upon the farm or in the poultry-yard.

It would be well, indeed, for England if the education of the children of cottagers and agricultural labourers was as well cared for as in these northern French villages. In the towns large schools are supported on a system not unlike that of our British or Birkbeck schools. The masters—Frères des Ecoles Chrétiennes—are dressed in a soutane or cassock, and have bands at the neck and a broad-brimmed hat, so that they are constantly mistaken for priests by English tourists; they are generally laymen, however, and have no ecclesiastical functions whatever. The children of farm labourers attend village schools, where the parents of those who can afford it pay a small sum for their instruction, while those who are too poor are assisted by private committees of the wealthier inhabitants of the district.

FRENCH SHOW OF POULTRY AND DAIRY PRODUCE.

AN exhibition of French poultry has just been held in Paris, in the Palace of Industry; so that, while one section of the public was feasting in imagination on fat fowls, or turkey and truffles, another was lost in admiration of the masterpieces of art—the poultry show occupying a portion of that division of the building appropriated to beaux-arts. Certainly, if cooking be a fine art, the production of food to be cooked is entitled to the same consideration; and what improvements have been made in this direction by the rearers of poultry may be estimated by the fact that the exhibition included 425 fowls, capons, and pullets, of the varieties named Bresse, La Flèche, Houdan, and Creve Cœur; a host of corpulent birds from Normandy; and ducks, geese, and pigeons from everywhere, laid out in enticing greasiness and skilfully trussed and ornamented with gilets. Some had their heads modestly concealed under their wings; others were standing up in full feather; and others, again, were only partially plucked, to display their points.

A not less interesting sight was the great show of cheeses, where 760 varieties of this favourite article of consumption could be seen and smelt. In the first class appeared the delicately-perfumed productions of Holland, Westphalia, Denmark, and Switzerland; and even Prussia has found time to compete in this peaceful contest of the dairies. As to butter, it was a bilious task to walk through the part of the building dedicated to this article, and see it assuming every hue, from snow-white to orange-red; but the display of butter and cheese making implements was remarkably interesting, and showed some striking improvements on the old methods of operation. No less interesting to the blasé Parisians, however, was the ruddy and comfortable aspect of the exhibitors themselves, who were objects of no little remark and attention.

Last year the capons took the grand prize; but on the present occasion the turkeys of Seine-et-Oise were the successful birds, and there was also a vast improvement in the size and number of the geese, some of which were pictures of succulence. Bavaria took the prize for cheese, and the department of Ain distinguished itself for its pies.

OPERA, CONCERTS, AND NEW MUSIC.

THE foreign papers announce the engagement of Mlle. Nielson by Mr. Mapleson for the ensuing season at Her Majesty's Theatre. Mlle. Nielson, now the principal singer at the Théâtre Lyrique, is said to be one of the most accomplished, and in all respects one of the most charming vocalists of the present day. The French journals publish from time to time interesting and touching accounts of the intimacy existing between the blonde Mlle. Nielson and the brune Mlle. Patti. If Mlle. Nielson is really the equal of Mlle. Adeline Patti, as many who are acquainted with her talent assert, all we can say is, that we shall be delighted to hear her when she appears next season in London.

A series of concerts, which promise to be highly interesting, are to be commenced next Saturday at Her Majesty's Theatre, under the direction of Signor Arditi.

At Mr. Henry Leslie's "Concert for Charitable Purposes," which took place, last Saturday, at St. James's Hall, a number of distinguished artists, including Mmes. Sainton-Dolby, Mlle. Lemmens-Sherrington, Miss Austine, Mr. Chaplin Henry, Mr. C. Lyall, M. Sainton, Mr. W. H. Cummings, and Mr. Santley, gave their services gratuitously. The part-music was sung by Mr. Leslie's choir, and Mr. Leslie himself conducted. Every piece announced in the long and varied programme was performed, with the exception of two harmonium solos set down for M. Lemmens, who was unfortunately unable to attend through illness. Six pieces were redemanded in the first part alone—Mr. Henry Leslie's arrangement of "Auld Lang Syne," executed by the choir; a pianoforte solo (Voss's "Ecume de mer"), by Miss Bennett, a member of the choir; a new song, "The Gift and the Giver," composed by Signor Arditi, sung by Mr. Santley; Joseph Barnby's part-song, "Sweet and Low," by the choir; "The Bay of Biscay," Mr. W. H. Cummings; and "The Chough and Crow," in which the solo parts were sung by Mmes. Lemmens-Sherrington, Mlle. Sainton-Dolby, and Mr. Santley. Mlle. Lemmens-Sherrington's "Chanson de l'Abelle" was much and deservedly applauded; as also was a "rondo mazurka" for the violin, composed and executed by M. Sainton.

Pleasant Recollections. By GEORGE BICKNELL. The New Derby Galop. Sinclair and Co.

"Pleasant Recollections" is a collection of souvenirs which to some will be pleasant, to others the reverse. "Slap Bang," for instance, as if it had not been heard often enough on the barrel-organ, is here presented to us arranged for the piano.

"The New Derby Galop" is the great Epsom race expressed, described, or at least suggested, by music. The music, however, is equally suggestive of every other race; nor, if the cue were not given in the title, would it be suggestive of any race at all. A galop is a galop all the same.

The Musical Directory, Register, and Almanac, 1867. Rudall, Rose, Carte, and Co.

This interesting and, to musicians, invaluable work, in addition to all the information usually contained in an almanac, gives a catalogue of existing musical societies, a "Record of operas with names of composers and dates," a list of all the concerts that have taken place in town and country during the past year, with an abundance of other particulars of a similar kind. The work is well arranged, and one of its best features is an index to all the music published in the year 1866.

Cassell's Choral Music. Selected, Marked, and Edited by HENRY LESLIE. Cassell and Co.

Messrs. Cassell, Petter, and Galpin, well known by their numerous series of popular literary works, are now coming forward as music publishers. The first number of their "Choral Music" is, as every one may see, well printed, on excellent paper. The name of the editor is a sufficient promise that the music will be judiciously selected; and the publication of a new part-song by Henry Smart—"A Calm Sea"—may be looked as a good augury of what is to follow.

THE SUICIDES OF PARIS.—We learn from French official documents that the proportion of suicides increases in Paris. There were 613 suicides during the year 1865, of which 496 were male and 117 female. The ratio of male suicides was 5.8 per 1000 of the entire population; that of females only 1.4; so that the male ratio is four times as great as the female. The number is very un-qualitatively distributed through the various months. In April there were seventy-nine cases; the next largest number was in May, fifty-nine; the lowest in February, twenty-nine. The proportion increases with age, to such an extent that at sixty and upwards there are five times more male suicides and two and a half times more female suicides than at the age fifteen—twenty-five. One remark with surprise that three suicides have been accomplished by children under fifteen years of age.—*British Medical Journal.*

OBITUARY.

MR. ALEXANDER SMITH.—We deeply regret to have to announce the death of Mr. Alexander Smith, author of "A Life Drama" and other poems. Mr. Smith had been confined to his bed for three or four weeks, his illness originating in an attack of diphtheria, settling into gastric fever. For a time it was thought he was recovering; but last week the malady took a more dangerous turn, and on Saturday morning last he died at Wardie, near Edinburgh, at the early age of thirty-six. The deceased was the son of a pattern-designer in Kilmarnock, and followed in early life his father's business. He was designer to a lace manufactory in Glasgow, where, in 1853, he published his first volume, "A Life Drama," portions of which had appeared the previous year in the *Critic*. The West of Scotland is well known as a home of poetry, and Mr. Smith records that on one occasion he supped there with "seventy poets," but in 1854 he was attracted to the Scottish metropolis, the Town Council having offered him the situation, then in their gift, of secretary to the University. Though that office was not quite a sinecure, it gave Mr. Smith leisure to pursue his literary career. Accordingly, in 1855, he, along with Mr. Sydney Dobell, published "Sonnet on the Crimean War," and in 1857 he gave forth "City Poems," and "Edwin of Deira." During the last six or eight years Mr. Smith had, however, dedicated his talents mainly to prose writing. In 1865 he published "A Summer in Skye," which contained some charming descriptions of Edinburgh and its people, and of Scottish scenery. His "Dreanthorpe" and "Alfred Hagart's Household" are probably still better known. Mr. Smith was a frequent contributor to magazine and journalistic literature, and lately edited, for Macmillan, a beautiful edition of Burns. Whatever the merits of Mr. Smith's poetry, which, for a time were so keenly discussed by the critics, he lived to establish for himself a wide reputation both in this country and in America. As a prose writer, not less than as a poet, he was always graceful and flowing, abounding in imagery and fancy. It is deeply to be regretted that his fate has been that of so many other poets, and that a premature death has cut short a career so full of promise. Mr. Smith leaves behind him a widow and young family.

MARQUIS DE LAROCHEJAQUELIN.—The French newspapers announce the decease, on Sunday night, of a nobleman whose career is closely interwoven with the recent political history of his country. Henri Auguste Georges du Vergier, Marquis de Larochefoucauld, was born in stirring times and of a family celebrated for their devotion to a cause which had then sunk, as most people judged, irretrievably. He was the nephew of Louis, the hero who so nobly waged an unequal struggle, in La Vendée, against the Republic and Napoleon, for the cause of legitimacy. His uncle Auguste, notwithstanding the family traditions, entered into the service of Napoleon, and was severely wounded at the battle of Moskwa, where he fell into the hands of the Russians. He afterwards served under Louis XVIII., and was wounded at the battle of Matis, where his brother Louis, then Commander-in-Chief of the Royal army, was killed. Young Henri was born in the year 1805, on Sept. 28, in the castle of Citron, Gironde. When about twelve years of age the young Marquis received from the hands of the Prussian ambassador a magnificent sword, presented by the officers of the Prussian army, as a token of their admiration of the hereditary devotion and fidelity of the family of Larochefoucauld. He became a pupil at the school of St. Cyr, and afterwards held a commission in the French cavalry. In 1828 he accompanied the Russian army across the Balkan, and served as a volunteer in the war with the Grand Seignor. He had been created a peer of France in 1815, but not being twenty-five years of age before the revolution of 1830, he had not taken his seat in the Upper House before the abdication of Charles X. After that event he proceeded to La Vendée, where he joined in the insurrection to place the young Count de Chambord on the throne. On the suppression of this revolt the Marquis, who had escaped from the country, was cited to appear, and, not obeying the summons, was condemned to death in accordance with the French law. He was finally pardoned and returned to France, where he took part in certain business pursuits, and especially gave the countenance of his name to a company entitled that of "Les Inexplosibles de la Loire." The department of Morbihan elected him in the year 1842 their representative in the Chamber of Deputies, where he at once assumed the position among the Legitimist party which might have been expected from his birth and from his former career. In the Parliamentary recess of 1843 he made a pilgrimage, along with some of his colleagues, to Bigrave-square, where they were received by the Count de Chambord, who then assumed the style of a Sovereign. Guizot, in the Parliamentary address of the 21st of January, 1844, stigmatised this as a culpable manifestation; and this being agreed to by the majority of the Chamber, the Marquis and the other deputies thus stigmatised resigned their seats, and were at once re-elected. After resuming his seat he took part in the discussions on recruiting the army, on prison reform, electoral reform, religious congregations, and other matters. He shared in the views of M. Giroude, which compelled him to ally the principles of legitimacy with the sovereignty of the people, and, in consequence, he was always found voting with the Opposition. After the Revolution of February, 1848, the Marquis, in his own name and in that of the whole of La Vendée, gave in an unreserved adhesion to the newly-established Government. He was elected by the department of Morbihan to the Constituent Assembly, and was generally found voting with the "Droite." Nevertheless, he voted with the "Gauche" against surtaxes for newspapers, in favour of the abolition of the punishment of death, and against the tax on salt. On being re-elected to the Legislative Chamber he raised the old flag of his party against the now-tottering Republican institutions. He even made a proposal to call upon the people to pronounce by a universal vote for the Republic or a Monarchy. After the coup-d'état of the 2nd of December he took the oath of allegiance to the new Government as President of the Council of La Vendée and a few weeks after the establishment of the Empire (on Dec. 31, 1852) he received the appointment of Senator. In the Senate he was especially eloquent in pleading the cause of the Pope, and his views on this subject, as well as upon many others, were frequently opposed; but the talent and courage with which he defended his positions never failed to win for him the respect of his opponents, and he will long be remembered in the French Upper Chamber, where he leaves a void not to be readily filled. The Marquis was in his sixty-second year, and has died of a painful malady, which he bore with great courage and resignation. So long as there was hope he battled with his illness with all his vigour and energy; but when the hopelessness of his disease became manifest, he submitted patiently. His fearful sufferings drew from him not a murmur. "I now think but of God," he said to a friend a few days before he lost consciousness. The Pope sent him his blessing, which was to him a great comfort. For several days prior to his decease he was insensible. His son and his other relatives stood round his bed, and he passed peacefully away amid their sobs and prayers. As the *France* observes, "the time is not come to pass an opinion on a life so disturbed, and which has been engaged in such struggles. One, moreover, so closely interwoven with the political history of the last thirty years, must wait the verdict of a more distant generation; but we may surely say that the Marquis de Larochefoucauld will fill no inconsiderable place in the history of his time."

THE SHIP WESTMINSTER, from Calcutta for London, was captured in the Pacific Ocean in September by Chinese pirates. A portion of the crew were murdered, and the remainder were set adrift, but subsequently rescued.

A CAPITALIST OF BERNE, NAMED SCHWEIZER, has just committed suicide in consequence of some unfortunate speculations in which he had squandered money entrusted to his safe keeping. On learning that a warrant for his arrest had been issued he blew out his brains.

PARIS IN THE SNOW.—A Paris correspondent writes:—"Paris, like London, has had its three days. After a New-Year's Day which began in dirt and wet, and was keenly cold and brightly frosty at midnight, came a heavy fall, and the city woke the following morning to find itself enveloped in a thick white blanket, with, too,

the snowy flakes
Descending, and with never-ceasing lapse
Softly alighting upon all below.

Nothing could have been more sudden or unexpected. It had been even mild in the early part of the previous day, while at night the stars shone brightly and the air had the crisp sharpness which so often foreruns a long and bitter frost. It seemed far too cold for snow. Yet the emergency had been fully provided for before the day's business began, and concurrently with the discovery of the fall the looker-on saw the process of its removal. At no time was traffic suspended. The *cabriolets* and *remises* plied as usual, the omnibuses passed from stopping-place to stopping-place, and the holders of "correspondence" tickets were never, so far as I saw, disappointed. It is true the pace became wretchedly slow, and the demand both for cabs and omnibuses places was so enormously in excess of supply that walking was imperative in many instances. But the visitation and card-leaving of the season was as much responsible for this as the weather; and it is a simple fact that the organisation of the city prevented both riders and pedestrians from suffering severely from what seems to have stopped the business of London for many consecutive hours. But, it may be urged, the fall of snow in Paris must have been trivial to that in England, and there was, perhaps, small merit in dealing with it successfully. The supposition is correct as to fact, but utterly fallacious in inference. In places which had not been dealt with by the authorities the snow was several inches deep, and in the higher portions of the suburbs huge drifts testified in the early part of the day to what the condition of the boulevards and streets would have been if left to right themselves. My business carried me to the outskirts of the city, and the byroads near the hospital for aged female paupers, Salpêtrière, some of the long wharves on the more distant banks of the Seine, the suburbs stretching towards Ivry, were all heavily clogged with snow. This was before noon. Later, after spending some hours in the hospice, we found a marked improvement, and the road cleaners and restorers were then busily at work. Every vehicle we saw was engaged, and there was nothing for it but to walk back. All along the Seine, past the Morgue, round by Notre Dame, by place and street to the very centre of the city, and on every side, were men at work or evidences of work performed. The traffic on the main boulevards was far greater than usual, the shops were full of customers, the cafés in the full swing of business."

CLEARING THE STREETS IN ST. PANCRAS.

AT the meeting of the board of works, highways, and sewers of St. Pancras, held on Tuesday at the board-room, Edward-street, Hampstead-road—Mr. J. Salter in the chair—Mr. W. B. Scott, the chief surveyor, presented a report, stating that, in consequence of the heavy fall of snow last Wednesday and the almost entire stoppage of traffic, he took steps to open the main thoroughfares. He sent to the several contractors for cleansing the streets orders for the removal of the snow from the main thoroughfares, with instruction to employ any number of carts and men day and night. The assistant surveyors were also authorised to employ any number of additional hands and relays for the night work. It was not attempted to clear away the snow from the whole width of the roads, but mainly for a width of about ten feet from the curbs, by which course was also removed all the snow that had been swept from the footways and cast off the roofs of houses, and the channels left open and free for the thaw when it came. The total number of carts employed was on the average 120 daily, nearly half of them being teams, with the assistance of nearly 300 men; 7000 loads were carted away, and nearly ten miles cleared. Arrangements were made for taking the snow into the squares and shooting it round the inclosures. The canal would seem to be a very ready means of disposing of snow, but the canal company would probably greatly object to such a proceeding. Canal frontage in London is valuable, and wharfingers usually have accumulation of materials in which they deal on the wharf, so that no more unoccupied space is left along the water frontage than is sufficient to work their carts. The same difficulty would arise in getting snow into the Thames. The number of carts might seem small, but they were all that could be collected. One contractor said he had one hundred horses standing idle in his stable, but not one was roughed, so he could not send them out. Roughed horses could not be obtained in a sudden emergency. As to the supply of labour, all who applied were employed, but there was no great readiness to fall to work. A party of eight able-bodied young men who were singing "Got no work to do" along Edward-street were asked if they wanted work, and replied in the affirmative. They were told to go to the yard (not one hundred yards off) to get shovels and go to work. They went part of the way and then resumed their singing, but did not apply for shovels for even such easy work as lifting snow into carts. While attention had been devoted principally to the removal of snow from the main thoroughfares, the side streets have not been neglected, as men had been employed to clean the channels and gullies of the snow. During Sunday nearly 300 men were engaged in keeping the channels and gullies clear of the snow in the main thoroughfares and side streets. Although the thaw has been so sudden and rapid there has been no case of flooding on any road in the parish. The clean condition of the main thoroughfares is a satisfactory proof of the beneficial effects of the course that was adopted. The removal of snow is the duty of the contractors when called upon to do so, but it is not included in the sum for which they undertake to cleanse the roads. They have not before been called upon, but on this occasion they acted very energetically. The surveyor concludes his report by acknowledging the energetic services of the assistant surveyors, and also of Mr. Worrell, the chief clerk. Mr. Lawford said St. Pancras had set an example to all other parishes. Mr. Eldridge said the proceeding had cost the parish £1000, and it was a £1000 wasted. He could not imagine a more extravagant act of madness than that of clearing the snow away, for if they had let it alone it would have melted all away. Mr. John Taylor strongly condemned the proceedings, and could not understand why it had been done when the rates were already so heavy. If the Humane Society had done their duty, all the contractors would have been locked up for bringing out their horses in such weather. Mr. Stephenson considered that great credit was due to their chief surveyor and other officers. Mr. Silas Taylor said the expenditure of the £1000 was a great benefit to the shopkeepers, and if the frost had continued the parish officers would not have been blamed. The chairman said if they did not do their duty they would be set aside by another body who would. Mr. Worrell pointed out that by the 125th section of the Metropolitan Local Management Act they were required to employ a sufficient number of persons for the sweeping and cleansing of the streets, and removing all dirt, ashes, rubbish, ice, snow, &c. The motion was adopted, and a resolution was then moved and agreed to, acknowledging the services of Mr. W. B. Scott, the chief surveyor; Mr. Worrell, the clerk, and other officers, and also of the chairman.

HOSPITAL FOR DISEASES OF THE CHEST, VICTORIA PARK.

THE annual general court of the governors of this institution was held, on Wednesday, at the London Tavern—J. D. Allcroft, Esq., V.P., in the chair. The following report was presented:—"In their last report reference was made to the opening of the new Albert wing, and the committee have now the pleasure to state, that not only have the benefits dispensed by the hospital been considerably greater than during any former period, but that the increased accommodation thus afforded has very appreciably promoted the comfort of all the inmates. The medical report shows that the in-patients under treatment have amounted to 641, or ninety-five more than the return for the previous year. Of the cases discharged, 580 have been more or less materially relieved, and sixty-one have died. The total number of in-patients under treatment since the wards were opened in 1855 is 4549. The number of out-patients admitted during the year as new cases is 14,335, showing the large increase of 2448 over those of the previous year. The weekly attendance has averaged 1238, or 255 more than the year before. The entire number of out-patients that have received gratuitous advice and medicine since the foundation of the institution amounts to 127,845. Although the patients have, as heretofore, for the most part resided in the surrounding districts, yet a considerable number of cases have been received from other localities, embracing the more distant parts of the kingdom. The receipts include—donations, £3281 5s. 6d.; annual subscriptions, £2435 15s.; bequests, £3669 1s. 3d.; collections after sermons, £165 16s. 7d.; and incidentals, £43 4s. 3d.; making, with a balance of £588 12s. 3d. at the commencement of the year, a total income of £10,453 14s. 10d. There has been paid on account of the new wing, including furniture, £783 1s. 11d.; and for current expenses, £737 1s. 2d.; making a total expenditure of £1516 3s. 1d., and leaving, therefore, a balance at the bankers' of £693 18s. 9d.; together with a further sum of £1600 which now stands as a claim against the estate of Overend, Gurney, and Co., Limited. The larger balance than usual still remaining to the credit of the institution is due to the receipts from bequests having been exceptionally much greater during the last year; but against this there is a sum of £1250 that has yet to be paid to the Crown for the purchase of the freehold of the hospital; and it must be borne in mind that, while the expenditure for the ensuing year cannot be estimated at less than £7300, the income from annual subscriptions, on which alone reliance can be placed, does but amount to £2435; so that great exertions will be necessary to make up this large deficiency." The report was adopted. Henry Tucker, Esq., was elected treasurer, and other officers appointed for the ensuing year. It was announced that Earl Grosvenor, M.P., had consented to preside at the anniversary festival to be held in March; and a vote of thanks to the chairman closed the proceedings.

DEATH FROM NEGLECT.—An inquest was held on Monday, in Bethnal-green, on the body of a married woman, named Ann Ferry, thirty-six years of age, who died under very distressing circumstances, in the house where she resided, Green-street, Bethnal-green, after she had given birth to a child, on Wednesday last. She was the wife of a dock labourer, and lived with her husband. Her confinement being imminent, she procured an order for admission to the Lying In Hospital in the City-road. On Wednesday last she felt very ill, and asked to be removed to the hospital; but the snow lay so deep upon the ground that when a cab was procured the cabman refused to convey her unless he had a fare of five shillings. The need to go got more and more urgent, so her friends about contrived to raise the sum amongst them; whereupon the cabman declared he must have seven shillings before he would go. This was beyond their means, and the cabman drove away. Directly after this the poor woman fell down and the child was born. Her sister ran off to the relieving officer, who gave an order on Mr. Massingham, the parish doctor, to whom she bore the mislike, begging him to come. This was at half-past six in the evening. She told Mr. Massingham that her sister was without any midwife or doctor, and described her condition. But the parish doctor said he could not come till next morning. On the woman representing to him how her sister was in pain, he gave her a bottle of medicine for the patient, but would not go to her himself. At half-past ten o'clock the sister came again, and found the parish doctor sitting in his room reading a newspaper. Again she told of the pain and the want, imploring him because her sister was dying. He said he could not help that; he would not come till his usual time next day. At half-past eight o'clock on the Thursday morning another woman went to him, but someone called upon him just as the messenger was urging her request, and he said he could not attend to her for half an hour; so the woman went back unsuccessful. At half-past ten o'clock that morning, two hours after the last messenger, came to the parish doctor Anne Ferry, a girl fifteen years old. She too, like her aunt the night before, found Mr. Massingham sitting in his room, reading a newspaper. The girl exclaimed, "Mother is dying!" and received for reply, "Fiddle-de-dee! Nonsense! If your mother was put to bed yesterday, it can't be said that she will die to-day;" whereupon the girl crying, he vociferated "It's no use your crying! It's no use your kicking up that noise here; it won't bring her to life again!" This last messenger went back, too, "crying all the way;" the mother died that day at half-past twelve o'clock; the parish doctor came to the corpse some time after. Dr. Harris, who made a post-mortem examination, gave evidence that in his opinion the case demanded very active treatment; and even with medical treatment it might have terminated fatally. Mr. Massingham was not present at the inquest. The jury returned the following special verdict:—"That the deceased expired from the mortal effects of inflammation of the lungs and effusion into the pericardium, with shock to the system, from childbirth; and the jurors further say that the conduct of the parish doctor was inhuman in not attending the deceased when the parish order was given to him, there appearing to be nothing to prevent him doing so; and the jurors also say that he is unfit to be continued as the parish doctor, and should be required to resign such appointment." A subscription was then raised for the family of the deceased.

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